AN INQUIRY

INTO THE

Connection between the present

PRICE OF PROVISIONS,

AND THE

SIZE OF FARMS,

WITH

REMARKS ON POPULATION

AS AFFECTED THEREBY.

To which are added,

PROPOSALS

FOR PREVENTING FUTURE SCARCITY.

By a FARMER.

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PREFACE.

SO many different opinions having of late been offered to the public concerning the cauſe of the preſent advanced price of proviſions, ſome attributing it to the engroſſing and monopolizing of land, others to luxury, others again to regraters and foreſtallers; I cannot forbear giving my ſentiments on theſe ſubjects, as I think the different arguments I have met with are by no means ſatisfactory; but ſuch as, in many inſtances, may tend to miſlead my countrymen, and inflame the imaginations of that claſs, who, on ſuch occaſions, often become riotous, and dangerous to a ſtate. When this is the caſe, it is ſurely incumbent on every one who thinks he has it in his power, to ſet ſuch authors right where it may appear they have been miſinformed; I ſhall therefore not ſcruple, though unaccuſtomed to the preſs, to refute theſe argu-

ments in the manner which my profeſſion enables me to do. Accordingly, I ſhall in the following ſheets endeavour to point out the real cauſes of ſcarcity, and at the ſame time offer ſuch remedies as appear to me capable of producing the deſired effect; I mean regular and moderate prices of proviſions.

I ſhall begin with the article of monopolizing land, as that ſeems to be the moſt general topic of the preſent times. The evil tendency of this has been attempted to be explained by ſeveral writers, whoſe plauſible arguments may miſlead thoſe who are not converſant in the nature and management of different ſoils, and who therefore give credit to every abſurdity; for if the ſubject ſavours of compaſſion, it is popular, and carries conviction, though it is not underſtood.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

Page

ON MONOPOLIZING LAND. 1

SECTION I.

The national Benefit of proper-sized Farms. 3

SECTION II.

That large Farmers retaining their corn, under the present Laws, is beneficial to the nation. - - - 14

SECTION III.

Of the different Supply of Markets from large or small Farms, in regard to Pigs, Poultry, Butter, &c. - - 18

SECTION IV.

Of Population, as affected by large or small Farms. - - 24

CHAPTER II.

ON JOBBERS, FORESTALLERS, AND REGRATORS, 36

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER III.

ON LUXURY, AS AFFECTING PROVISIONS AND POPULATION. P. 45

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE REAL CAUSES OF THE ADVANCED PRICE OF PROVISIONS. 52

CHAPTER V.

ON THE MEANS OF PROCURING PLENTY. 67

SECTION IV.

On Markets. 101

A short Account of the CORN TRADE *at Amsterdam.* - - - 113

APPENDIX. 121

AN INQUIRY INTO THE Connection between the preſent advanced PRICE OF PROVISIONS, AND THE SIZE OF FARMS.

CHAPTER I.

ON MONOPOLIZING LAND.

TO proceed with all poſſible candor in my inveſtigation of this ſubject, I ſhall enumerate the many evils which are ſaid to ariſe from the monopolizing of land, whereby it is ſuppoſed the preſent ſcarcity is artificially produced. A cool examination of facts will probably ſhew us, whether this practice bears any, and what ſhare in the calamity we complain of.

It is ſaid, *Firſt*, That large farmers, by growing opulent, become negligent of their buſineſs; that they, conſequently, do not cultivate their lands to ſo much advantage as they might, and that by this means their produce is leſs than that of an equal proportion of land in the hands of many ſmall farmers, who, with their families, did the chief of the work themſelves.

Secondly, That large farmers, being opulent, are not under the neceſſity of bringing their corn to market, but retain it, to the great diſtreſs of the poor.

Thirdly, That our markets are not ſo well ſupplied with pigs, poultry, butter, and eggs, as when there were ſmall farmers, whoſe wives attended the markets with thoſe articles, which rendered the price of butcher's meat cheap.

Fourthly, That large farms are the occaſion of depopulation, whereby the number of labourers is ſo much diminiſhed, that, in ſome places, there are ſcarcely hands ſufficient to till the ground; conſequently, that the cropping of the land is neglected, and the harveſt badly got in; both which muſt diminiſh the quantity, and enhance the price of corn.

SECTION I.

The national benefit of proper ſized farms.

IN anſwer to the firſt of the foregoing objections againſt large farms, I ſhall ſet out with laying down a principle in which I am confident all parties will agree; it is, that the produce of the earth, whether in tin, lead, iron, corn, or wool, is the riches of our nation; and therefore, that however thoſe articles may be obtained, it is the quantity that is the only national object. Farther, that whatever the article is, the ſurplus of what is wanted will be locally a drug in real value or eſtimation, till converted to its proper uſe; if lead or iron, it will be ſold to purchaſe neceſſaries; if corn, we ſhall conſume what is neceſſary for our ſupport, and the ſurplus will be ſold for other commodities which we may require: at all events, it is the quantity to be produced which the nation ſhould attend to. This being granted, it remains to prove by what means the greateſt quantity is to be produced.

The advocates for ſmall farms will ſay, By the induſtry which is ſo conſpicuous among ſmall farmers, who, being obliged to ſtruggle for their livelihood, can neither

commit waſte, nor be guilty of neglect. I ſay, that it is by the induſtry of thoſe who, being eaſy in their circumſtances, can attend their buſineſs with ſpirit and chearfulneſs, and who, by daily taſting the ſweets of their labours, are encouraged to redouble their activity. But let us conſult facts, and ſee which argument they will beſt ſupport.

It has pretty generally been laid down as a maxim, by the gentlemen I allude to, that farms of one hundred acres are the proper ſize *. This they ſay without ſpecifying the kind of ſoil; a circumſtance, ſurely, ſomewhat material to be known. However, I will aſſiſt them in that point, which I am enabled to do, by finding others, or perhaps the ſame under another ſignature, talk of 50*l.* a year.—We will therefore ſuppoſe the land at 10*s.* an acre; and as we muſt take the average price of England, I will call it good loam; and to aſſiſt their argument, I will tell them what are the neceſſary requiſites for ſuch a farm. Firſt, it is abſolutely neceſſary that the farmer ſhould have in ready caſh at leaſt 500*l.*—When I mention this ſum, I am far

* Viz. Author of Political Speculations, and others.

far within bounds: had he more, he and his country would reap the benefit of it. I ſhall not enter into the minute detail of every inſtrument to be purchaſed, and every operation neceſſary to be done, but only chalk out the great outlines of the œconomy neceſſary on ſuch a farm.

He muſt keep at leaſt 4 horſes; 5 would be better, but almoſt too much for his capital. He muſt keep

1 Ploughman,
1 Boy,
1 Threſher,
1 Maid,
1 Odd man.

Now, without entering into the management of his farm, or conſidering whether he is a good or a bad farmer; I mean to prove, from the above circumſtances, that three hundred acres of ſuch land in the hands of one man, will produce more, and conſequently that ſuch a ſized farm, conſidered in a national view, is more beneficial. I ſhall not be thought unreaſonable in alloting my farmer on the three hundred acres, a proportionate ſum of money, cattle, and ſervants.

Thus he will have 1500 *l.* in money,
12 Horſes,
9 Men,
3 Boys,
3 Maids, or the labour of three women.

Previous to what I am now going to ſay, I muſt mention ſome facts which are neceſſary by way of explanation to ſome of my readers, *viz.* that there are operations on this, and indeed almoſt every kind of ſoil, which, at different times, require different ſtrength of horſes: for example, ſometimes ſix horſes will be required in one plough, to break up a piece of ground for fallow; thus, in this inſtance, the farmer of three hundred acres will have two ploughs at work, when the little farmer cannot have one, but muſt wait till it is perhaps too late to recover his ſeaſon; or at leaſt he will have loſt all the benefit of the roaſting weather, which is to make his fallow. On the other hand, there are many operations in fallowing, and in ſeed-time, when three-horſe ploughs are ſufficient; in which caſe the farm of three hundred acres will have four three-horſe ploughs at work when the other can have but one. To this ſome will ſay, why not in the one inſtance hire, and in the other work with two-horſe ploughs, in which caſe they would be equal, as in

part of Yorkſhire, Norfolk, Eſſex, &c. I anſwer, that at the one time, perhaps, his neighbours are equally buſy with himſelf; and as to the latter, I will agree there are times when two-horſe ploughs are uſeful: but if horſes go abreaſt when there is any moiſture in this ſort of land, the damage done by their trampling the ſurface of the ground, will not be recovered in a twelvemonth. If what I have ſaid be truth, it is as evident, that the farmer of three hundred acres, with a proportionate capital and number of horſes, is able to do more than his proportion of work in the ſame time; and the doing of it at the critical juncture, is of ſo much the greater conſequence; thus his ground is naturally in better tilth, his fallows, ſeed-time, dung-cart, in ſhort, every operation performed better, becauſe they can be diſpatched; and his ground being in better order, it will not be denied but that his produce muſt be greater. There is alſo an advantage in the proportion of ſervants, which will not ſo eaſily be underſtood but by practical men; for it is natural to ſay, As one is to four, ſo are three to twelve: but this will not hold good in practice; for, in harveſt-time, and many other operations which require that kind of diſpatch, by throwing many hands together, the work is better and more ex-

peditiouſly done : for example, in harveſt; two drivers, two loaders, two pitchers, two rakers, and the reſt at the rick, or in the barn, will diſpatch double the work that the ſame number of hands would do, if divided into different gangs on different farms. Howſoever unintelligible this matter may appear to ſome, it is fact. But the circumſtance of the great farmer's employing an equal number of men may be denied; in anſwer to which I can only ſay, that daily obſervation proves it, and ſhall add moreover, that reapers will flock to him, when the little farmer is not able to get a hand: the reaſon is evident, namely, that labourers will always prefer that maſter who is moſt likely to employ them longeſt, that they may not loſe time in ſhifting. But as I mean to confute by facts, and not by arguments, I will appeal to the farmer, whether what I advance is true or not.

The great farmer will alſo have a conſiderable advantage in reſpect to his carts and waggons; for he will not require above two waggons and four carts, whereas each of the little ones is obliged to have one waggon and two carts; thus there will be a ſaving of the expence of one waggon and two carts on an equal ſpot of ground; which ſurplus may be expended in ſtock

or labour: the ſame will hold good with regard to harrows, rollers, and many other implements.

There is likewiſe a national advantage attending this farm, which cannot be on the ſmall one; I mean, the keeping of live ſtock; oxen, or ſheep, or both. It may be aſked, Why? and whether an equal number of cattle may not be kept on the three ſmall farms? The reaſons why they cannot are many: The purchaſing of ſtock, and providing artificial food for them, not only requires capital, but the reſolution of a man in an extenſive buſineſs: for though 500*l.* are the proportion for one hundred acres, yet ſuppoſing a part laid by for ſuch purpoſes, I will ſay 50*l.* out of each 500*l.* my argument is, that 150*l.* in the hands of one man, will encourage him to do more than 50*l.* in thoſe of the other. For the truth of this I will appeal to the feelings of farmers, or indeed of men on the Royal Exchange. However, there is a yet more ſubſtantial reaſon; which is, that the little farmer cannot do it with ſo much profit; for ſuppoſe he ſhould have a flock of one hundred ſheep, which is a great many for ſuch a farm, that flock will not maintain a ſhepherd, though it requires as much

care

care and attendance as triple the number, which would be very eaſily tended by one man; nor is it ſufficient to make a beneficial fold: even if there is a common, the ſmall farmer will not reap an equal advantage with the larger; for his ſheep muſt ſtraggle by themſelves, and the ſhepherd who attends the large flock will always take care to have the beſt feed, while the others are drove among buſhes and furzes to ſeek a miſerable livelihood; loſing perhaps half their wool before ſheering time; and thus they become of leſs benefit, either to the owners or to the nation. With oxen, it is nearly the ſame: there muſt be artificial food provided for them, which is rarely ſeen on ſmall farms; nor indeed will the little farmer eaſily be induced to go into ſuch a culture: his capital is too ſmall, and he truſts to his corn to pay his rent, though the benefit of the dung of theſe cattle would be very conſiderable. This is one of the great advantages which attends the farmer who at the ſame time is the grazier; and who is of ſo much more value to his country, as he can, by the aſſiſtance of artificial paſture, bring cattle to market at a cheaper rate than when fed on old paſtures and hay; with the additional benefit to the nation, of employing more hands in procuring that food for the

cattle,

cattle, though they can be brought to market cheaper, and will be of courſe when the practice becomes more general.

In oppoſition to theſe arguments, I hear ſome ſay, that corn can be raiſed cheapeſt by the ſmall farmer, becauſe the chief of the labour is executed by himſelf and his family, whereas the labour on the great farm is done by others, whoſe wages muſt be paid out of the profits. Thoſe who argue thus are little acquainted with huſbandry affairs; for it will appear upon inquiry, that there neither is or can be one ſervant leſs kept on the three ſmall farms, than there are on the three hundred acres in the hands of one man. However induſtrious the ſmall farmer may be, it does not exempt him from keeping one ſingle ſervant the leſs; he muſt have, as I ſaid before,

1 Ploughman,
1 Boy,
1 Threſher,
1 Odd-man,
1 Maid.

If his ſons and daughters are grown up, and able to do the buſineſs of the farm, they ſeldom remain at home; and if they do, they are not maintained for ſo little as hired ſervants: but we will ſuppoſe that matter equal. I only mean to prove, that the

the farmer cannot rely on his own labour; and if he does, I will maintain that he is a loſer by it. His employment ſhould be, a general attention to the whole: his threſher muſt be watched, or he will ſoon loſe his wages in corn not threſhed out; his mowers, reapers, &c. muſt be looked after; he muſt conſtantly go round his fences; he muſt ſee there is no neglect; which would be the caſe if he was confined to any one ſpot: if he chances to have a few ſheep, they will require as much attendance as a larger flock; yet he cannot afford to keep a ſhepherd: thus there are three men employed to look after three hundred acres, which would be at leaſt as well managed by one man on his horſe. To this it will be ſaid, No; the great farmer growing opulent, becomes negligent, and of courſe, his ground is not ſo well managed, and his produce is conſequently leſs. This is a contradiction in terms; for if he grows opulent, in what manner did he acquire his riches, but by having a greater return for his capital, and thereby being able to lay up ſomething annually, which the ſmall farmer ſeldom or ever has it in his power to do, unleſs indeed by a very uncommonly ſpirited huſbandry. There cannot be a clearer proof that a certain tract in the hands of

one

one man produces more than in the hands of many: for was it otherwiſe, and that he was carrying on a loſing trade, it is a known fact, that the greater his undertaking, the ſooner he would be ruined: but on the other hand, if there is ever ſo ſmall an annual ſaving, that will ſoon accumulate; and I will venture to ſay, that the man who finds he is carrying on a profitable buſineſs, will attend it with infinitely more ſpirit, than the poor dejected wretch, who is always labouring againſt the ſtream.

But this calculation of the comparative advantage of labour on the great and ſmall farms, only regards the common buſineſs of a farmer, without taking in the ſeveral great works of marling, land-draining, &c. by which ſuch conſiderable improvements have been made, but which there is rarely, if ever, an inſtance of on ſmall farms, for want of a ſufficient capital for ſuch an undertaking; and when I mention this advantage, let it be remembered that I conſider it as a national one, as I cannot admit a diſtinction between the profit of the farmer and that of the nation, each depending ſo intimately on the other.

SECTION II.

That the large farmers retaining their corn, under the preſent laws, is beneficial to the nation.

THE general outcry which has been made againſt the great farmer, for keeping his corn from market, has not failed to inflame the minds of almoſt all ranks of people. The arguments made uſe of have been plauſible, and could not but have weight with thoſe among us who are neither acquainted with huſbandry, the nature of markets, nor the corn laws. It is the language of men compaſſionating the miſerable ſtate of the diſtreſſed Poor, and conſequently one of thoſe popular topics which muſt affect the religious good man. But when we come coolly to examine the ſtate of our huſbandry, markets, and corn laws, and who are the preſent purchaſers of corn, we ſhall perhaps find, that it is a moſt happy circumſtance for this nation, that there are a ſett of wealthy farmers who have it in their power to retain a part of their growth in thoſe natural and beſt of granaries, their ricks. Was it otherwiſe, as the corn laws now ſtand, we might often, even

even with a moſt plentiful harveſt, be in the utmoſt danger of famine.

The argument made uſe of is, that the little farmer is, through neceſſity, obliged to threſh out his corn and bring it to market; but that the opulent man will not produce his, until it comes to a certain price. The firſt fact I will allow; for true it is, that the little farmer is obliged to bring his corn to market before Chriſtmas, to enable him to pay his rent; and therefore it is at that time that corn is cheapeſt: but what is the conſequence? Their little portion is ſoon gone, and you have no reliance but on the ricks of the great farmer to afford you a regular ſupply. Had their corn likewiſe been threſhed out and brought to market, what would have been the conſequence? the Poor could not have conſumed it; but it would have been cheap, and ſo cheap, that Bear-Key, which is eſteemed the barometer of our produce, would have pronounced corn plenty this year, at a time, when, I am confident, England had the greateſt reaſon to dread a ſcarcity; and, in this caſe, your corn might have been exported, perhaps with a bounty, without a poſſibility of receiving a ſingle grain back again. What would then have become of your Poor at Midſummer? This is a real fact, and lucky

it

it is for us at preſent, that either the great farmers wilfully retain, or by ſome other circumſtances have it not in their power to ſend corn to market in ſuch quantities as would gratify the ſpleen of ignorant, diſcontented people: for my own part, I am apt to ſuſpect that ſome have not in their power to do it: for I will confeſs that there is in ſome inſtances an evil attending great farms, which is, where landlords, when they lay many ſmall farms together, deſtroy barns to avoid the expence of repairs. Thus the want of threſhing-floors, added to the bad yield of the crop, may, in ſome places, prevent the great farmer's ſending to market what he would otherwiſe do. Some there may be, who greedy of gain, may wait a higher market; but they as often outſtand it. Wheat is now near 15*l.* per load: do not imagine that farmers in general are not content with ſuch a price. The fair trader in London would be ſatisfied with ſuch a profit: yet there are ſcheming ſpeculators who ruin themſelves and their neighbours. So it is with farmers. They are men like yourſelves; and let them ſtand on the ſame ground, for their occupation is full as honourable, and infinitely more beneficial to a nation. In plentiful years they muſt ſell cheap: let them then, when they have ſcanty crops, have a price equal to the loſs

in

in their quantity; treat them as you would be done by, and ceaſe ſuch illiberal abuſes againſt men who deſerve every encouragement, and who ſhould be conſidered by a wiſe nation as it's bulwark and the ſource of it's riches. Let theſe declaimers point me out a number of merchants, who, at the approach of a war, when a heavy increaſe of taxes is to be laid on the Poor, would not monopolize hemp, though the enhancing its price to government muſt neceſſarily add to the weight already laid on the Poor? How few are there who will not engroſs a commodity neceſſary for the manufacturer, and thereby render the national advantage of exporting his labours abortive, by raiſing the price ſo that we cannot ſell upon an equal footing with our neighbours? How very few are there, who, in the greateſt dearth at home, will not export our beef and corn, if they can do it to advantage? But if the farmer retains his corn but a day, applications are made to parliament, to force it if poſſible out of his barn. Let theſe declaimers, among whom there are many who, to get money, will think no ſcheme too wild, turn their hands to the plough, and ſee what plenty they will produce to their families. They will, I ſuſpect, though too late, diſcover that more ingenuity is requiſite in that, than in fabricating

a bill upon the Royal-Exchange, and that cloſe attention and hard labour are the price of the comforts which the farmer enjoys.

This ſubject has alſo been illuſtrated by the Author of the Conſiderations on the Exportation of Corn.

SECTION III.

Of the different ſupply of markets from large or ſmall farms, in regard to pigs, poultry, butter, &c.

ANOTHER national evil which has been pointed out as proceeding from the preſent cuſtom of monopolizing land, is the want of that ſupply of pigs, poultry, butter, and eggs, with which markets were ſo well ſtocked by little farmers, and which greatly tended to lower the price of other proviſions. In anſwer to the two firſt of theſe articles, I ſhall briefly obſerve, that they are not objects worthy the attention of the legiſlature; for few will conceive that dainties ſhould be brought to market to reduce the average price of proviſions: but was it otherwiſe, I will ſay, that no ſmall farmer can raiſe pigs and fowls in the ſame diſtrict at ſo low a price as butcher's meat,

no

no more than he can afford to ſell veal and lamb at the ſame price as beef and mutton; and therefore, eſpecially, when proviſions are dear, it is better that ſuch delicacies be kept from market, and that what they coſt in cramming, be expended in rearing up live ſtock.

But as ſome may differ with me in opinion, I ſhall inform ſuch, that it is not the little farmer who can rear either to advantage. If he is a ſuckler, not one drop of milk can be ſpared to the ſow which is to fatten her pigs, and if he has only one cow for the uſe of his family, the milk will be more advantageouſly conſumed among them than in his ſtye: farther, unleſs he has conſtant threſhing going on, that the pigs and poultry may always have to pick up the corn which is left in the ſtraw thrown out at the barn door, he will find that they will want the many handfuls of corn thrown to them, which are never taken account of, and not miſſed, becauſe they are taken from the great heap, but which, if meaſured out to the good houſewife, whoſe perquiſite they are, would ſtartle her at the end of the year. So thoroughly is a neighbour of mine ſatisfied of the truth of this, that he is determined never to rear another pig; convinced that he can buy ſtore pigs to put

up for fattening, cheaper than he can rear them; being well aſſured that they do not coſt him leſs than 8 *d.* per pound before they are put up: much leſs will he be able to ſell a ſucking pig at the price of butcher's meat. Thoſe who are acquainted with the fattening of ſuckling animals, know the truth of what I ſay.

It is only the cottager and large farmer who can rear them to advantage; the firſt, by letting a ſow with her litter of pigs run in the lanes, or rather, under that pretence, in the fields and meadows of the neighbouring farmers. Yet this cannot be deemed a national benefit. The only perſon who can rear pigs to real advantage, is the farmer who ſows fields of clover purpoſely for their uſe, (but this muſt be at a diſtance from large towns, where hay does not fetch an extraordinary price) or the dairy-man who makes butter and cheeſe. Theſe are likewiſe the only people who can ſupply us with butter at a reaſonable rate, and that by dint of capital and cloſe attention to that one article: nor are theſe men ſeated on what are called arable farms.

Here I will inform my opponents of a practice they are probably not acquainted with, which is, that in Denbighſhire and

Flintſhire, it is no uncommon thing to ſee hundreds of pigs, for which they grow clover on purpoſe, and which graze on the graſs lands adjoining the beach, and when the tide is out, they go down and feed on the ſea ooze, where they find ſhell-fiſh, &c. Theſe pigs are as regularly folded at night as ſheep. They are bought up by the diſtillers, &c. By this means pigs, or what is more proper for the farm, pork, is reared to moſt advantage. The perſon from whom I had this information, and who has been long a dealer in hogs, aſſures me of this fact; and that it is not uncommon to ſee five thouſand in one market; and he confirmed to me what I have advanced, that it is the great farmer only who can rear them to advantage, and that by this practice.

As to eggs, they may indeed, at particular times of the year, have been brought to market by the ſmall farmer: the ſame may alſo be done by the cottager's wife: not that it is ſuch a ſupply as will anſwer the purpoſe. It is the quantity which comes from Scotland, and other cheap countries, that can affect the market.

With regard to fowls, it is a known fact that it is the great farmers who chiefly

ſupply markets with them; for they only can do it to advantage.

One Shallcroft, who had a farm of 400 acres, and who lately died worth 10,000*l.* ſupplied Croydon market with fowls; and what is remarkable is, that it is chiefly the great farmers who have ſupplied that market with poultry and butter for many years paſt, and their wives have attended that market as regularly as the farmers did the corn market. That of butter cannot be doubted; and the other is as evident to thoſe who are the leaſt converſant in the matter. The threſhing-floor of the great farmer is always open, and it is the corn thrown out in the ſtraw that fattens the barn-door fowl; whereas the little farmer, whoſe threſhing-floor is not conſtantly employed, muſt at times feed them, and the wife, whoſe perquiſite they are, will not let them ſtarve while there is a grain of corn in the heap. If this is the caſe at Croydon, which is ſo near London, and from whence ſo much ſtraw is carried to ſupport the London market with all this grain in it, which would be picked out of the ſtraw by pigs and fowls; how ſtrong a proof is it, that the markets, at a diſtance from great towns, muſt be more eaſily ſupplied with

fowls

fowls in the neighbourhood of large farms, than where they are all ſmall ones?

I am almoſt aſhamed to have given a place to theſe anſwers; but the loſs of pigs, poultry, butter, and eggs, has been ſo general a topic in all companies, and in every pamphlet which has appeared, that, inſignificant as the ſubject is, I could not avoid expoſing the fallacy of the arguments made uſe of on this occaſion.

Let me now, in my turn, aſk, Who is it that ſupplies our markets with beef and mutton? It is the great and opulent farmer. Who is it that furniſhes the Poor with cheeſe, and ſuch butter as they ought to eat, good potted Cambridge butter? It is the great dairy men.—But among the various lamentable complaints with which we have been peſtered, I have not heard a ſyllable of the want of veal or lamb; No! there is plenty of them. Let theſe declaimers, if they really feel, as they pretend to do, for the Poor, bluſh at the ſight of it on their table. This is one of the real cauſes of the high price of meat. When a calf or a lamb can be made to fetch as much at three months old, as they would be worth when a ſteer or wether at two years old in the ordinary method of feed-

ing ſtock, this may ſometimes become a real evil; but not the want of other luxuries of the ſame kind.

SECTION IV.

Of population, as affected by large or ſmall farms.

THE laſt charge againſt the great farmer, or, as he is called, the monopolizer of land, is depopulation. The abſurdity of the aſſertion has often amazed me: but what makes it more ridiculous, is, that the ſame writer who tells us there is apprehenſion of famine, laments that there are not more mouths to eat the little we have. When indeed I conſider that the quickneſs of the conveyance in poſt-chaiſes has induced many gentlemen to travel for their amuſement, who, quitting London, where perhaps they were bred in a crowd, are ſtruck with the utmoſt aſtoniſhment at the vaſt ſize of Saliſbury Plain, without a houſe in view, and wonder how agriculture is carried on upon the Dorſetſhire Downs by ſome ſcattered ſhepherds with their flocks, or in the grazing countries, where they ſee nothing but fat oxen and a few ſcattered houſes, I am not ſurprized that the country has made ſuch an impreſſion on them; but were they to viſit the manufacturing

manufacturing towns which border on thoſe tracts, they would perhaps return with far different ideas. To theſe, I ſhould not think it worth the while to give any anſwer: but when I hear gentlemen who pretend to ſome knowledge in agriculture aſſert, that the holding large tracts of arable land is the cauſe of depopulation, I can no longer be ſilent. I have, indeed, frequently intended to give my opinion on this very intereſting ſubject, and am now the more particularly induced ſo to do, as I mean to avail myſelf of the very arguments made uſe of in a pamphlet lately publiſhed, under the title of, *Uniting and monopolizing Farms plainly proved diſadvantageous to the Land-owner, and highly prejudicial to the public*; ſo perfectly do they agree with thoſe I had before laid down to enforce the very contrary opinion.

The writer of that pamphlet ſuppoſes, as I would, a tract of land of eight hundred acres, or 400 *l. per ann.* in the occupation of one man, and a like quantity in the occupation of eight men. The only circumſtance in which I ſhall differ from him in his calculation is the number of ſervants in general, and the proportion of them that are kept in the houſe. My eſtimate

mate will be from my own knowledge, corroborated by the intelligence I have picked up on that ſubject in the different counties through which I have paſſed. But as the alteration I ſhall make in the number and diſtribution of the ſervants will rather make for this author's argument, he certainly can have no objection to it.

He ſets out with ſaying, that if the tract is in the hands of one man, his family will conſiſt of himſelf, a wife, three children, twelve ſervants, and ten labourers, each with a wife and three children; in all fifty.

Thus, the farmer's family — —	17
The ten labourers and their families	50
The whole number depending on the large farm in one occupation —	67

Then, on each of the eight ſmall farms, he ſuppoſes the farmer, his wife, and three children, and two ſervants, that is, ſeven in each family; and that each farm ſhould have a labourer, with five perſons in each labourer's family. In this caſe, the number of perſons depending on theſe lands thus divided into eight ſeparate farms will ſtand thus;

A far-

A farmer and his family — —		7
A labourer and his family — —		5
		12
Multiplied by eight — —		8
		96
Subtract — — — —		67
		29

Thus there are 29 perſons more dependant on the tract in the occupation of eight farmers.

The manner in which I ſhall ſtate it will be as follows, ſuppoſing the tract divided into eight farms.

To each farm:

The farmer, his wife, and three children, (one of which I ſhall allow to be a plowboy)			5
Threſher, his wife, and three children			5
			10
		Multiplied by	8
In conſequence of wedlock, —			80
Statute ſervants	Plowman 1 Odd man 1 Maid 1	Single and muſt remain ſo	24
	3 multiplied by 8		
			104

Now it is reaſonable to allow the ſame number of labourers on the tract in the poſſeſſion of one man, as there is on the eight farms: but whether it is allowed or not, I know that there is the ſame number of hands employed, though perhaps more advantageouſly diſpoſed of.

Thus there will be

8 Plowmen, ſix of whom are labourers capable of holding plow.

8 Threſhers } of theſe { 1 Shepherd
8 Labourers } perhaps { 1 Oxherd

8 Maids, or women working on the farm.

The eight plowboys, and the two for the ſhepherd and oxherd, ſhall be taken out of the cottager's family, as I have included the plowboys on the eight farms in the farmer's family.

But the œconomy of this farmer's family will be very different.

The farmer, his wife, and three children,		5
Statute ſervants in the houſe	Plowmen	2
	Threſher	1
	Shepherd	1
	Oxherd	1, or odd man
	Maids	2
		7
Day-labourers 19, (among theſe are the remaining occaſional threſhers and plowmen) each with a wife and three children —		95
		100

In conſequence of wedlock —	100
Statute ſervants remaining ſingle, only — — —	7

As to the ſix extraordinary maid-ſervants, I ſhall take no notice of them, ſuppoſing them to be better employed in weeding and picking up ſtones, than in ſcrubbing and dreſſing victuals for the ſingle men on the ſmall farms. I will therefore throw them into the number of cottagers wives, ſuppoſing ſome of theſe to be dead: but ſurely I have a right to claim ſeven men for the ſeven ſupernumerary farmers; and their work ought to be reckoned as ſomething; conſequently their labour allowed on the large tract in the occupation of one man; or elſe they muſt be conſidered as uſeleſs bailiffs, and conſequently as an incumbrance on the eſtate. However, as this author lays ſo much ſtreſs upon the labour of the ſmall farmer, we will admit them on this farm; and, ſuppoſing them likewiſe married, and with children, they will amount to — — — 35

Dependant on the large farm —	142
Subtract the number on the others,	104
Remains thirty-eight ſouls in favour of population on the one great farm.	38

But

But to examine it a little farther. There are, out of the

104 on the eight farms,	married men 16	married women 16	children 48	single men 16	single women 8
142 - -	27	27	81	only 5	only 2
In favour of the large farm in point of populat.	11	11	33		

I have taken this mode of calculating the inhabitants from the Author's own plan: but allowing the ſeven ſupernumerary married men to be ſingle, and deducting for their wives and children 28, there would remain 114, among whom there would be 20 married men inſtead of only 16 on the 8 ſmall farms. Had this Author ſtated the fact otherwiſe, and made the compariſon on paſture land, I ſhould have agreed with him: but on arable land, nothing is more contrary to the fact than what he lays down. Now we have each of us told our tale, and the fact only muſt determine who is right. At all events, I would adviſe gentlemen to make very ſtrict inquiry into the truth of the matter before they ſuffer themſelves to be led away by every publication that appears. I will acknowledge, that there is a management of land which may tend to diminiſh the number of people in that particular pariſh where it is practiſed; it is indeed what rarely happens in old farms,

but it may be an attendant on ſome of the new-incloſed common-field land, where, perhaps at the inſtigation of the landlord, too great a proportion is laid down to graſs. A ſenſible tenant will be glad to meet with old meadow; but few, I believe, will court new paſtures, ſince the introduction of clovers, &c. I will likewiſe ſay, that there are circumſtances when it may be prudent for both tenant and landlord. For example; ſuppoſe common-field land on a moory ſoil, beſt adapted to paſture land, and which with good management will, in a very few years, become equal to the beſt: or ſuppoſe chalky land, excellently well adapted to ſainfoin, but by the barbarous cuſtom of common-field tenure, rendered almoſt uſeleſs to the tenant. Are thoſe tenants who ſenſibly pay higher rent for ſuch land when incloſed, to be precluded the liberty of converting it to what it ought to be, merely to gratify the whim of a few theoretical farmers; or ſhould the nation be deprived of the increaſed produce, by its not being put under proper culture? and yet, if this is done to a great extent, it muſt diminiſh the labour, and conſequently drive away ſome of the inhabitants. But where do theſe gentlemen-writers think they are gone to? Perhaps to other ſpots, which once were poor ſtinted commons, but now are

covered

covered with ſheaves of corn, inſtead of the few ſtarved ſheep which were maintained there in the ſummer, for the winter food of crows and ravens. It is indeed certain, that large tracts of paſture land muſt keep a diſtrict thin of inhabitants: it could not well be otherwiſe, when, as formerly, graſs and hay were the only method of fattening bullocks: nor was that a branch which uſed to be carried on by the little or middling farmer: it was done by people of capital; and to turn it to the moſt advantage, or indeed to employ their capital, large tracts of land were neceſſary. It is, and muſt continue to be, the ſame in breeding countries; and on the downs, where our flocks are bred, large tracts are requiſite for a ſheep-walk. Beſt maiden down will not carry above two ſheep per acre to fold, without clover or good meadow to bait them on: but let it not be imagined that this is waſte; theſe little animals doubly earn their value before they come to market, by their fleeces, and by the many adjoining acres which they manure; and on this account it is, that in theſe and ſuch-like ſpots, large farms are indiſpenſably neceſſary: and the advantage of a large fold is ſo well known, that in parts of Wiltſhire where there are ſmall farms which have but ſmall flocks, it is a common practice to

throw

throw them into one fold, each man having them for as many nights as are equal to the proportion of his flock: nor indeed do I know any tract of country where exceſſive large farms, ſuch as have been alluded to, prevail, but in downy countries, where ſheep-walk is ſo neceſſary, and where often many acres are rented for a few ſhillings, Norfolk and Eſſex farms excepted: but in Norfolk I hope our author will not ſay the country has been depopulated by large farms, for by the ſenſible and ſpirited culture of the inhabitants of that country, nobly inſpired by Lord Townſhend, who quitted the office of Secretary of State to become the uſeful huſbandman, they have converted a barren ſand into the moſt fertile ſpot in England. View their fields of turnips, barley, clover, wheat, and ſhew me ſuch management in a country inhabited by little farmers. But how have they done it? by induſtry, and a ſenſible attention to their buſineſs; by the landlords ſenſibly dividing the country among opulent men, who, by dint of capital, were able to cover their ſoil with clay or marle at the expence of the then fee-ſimple of the land, and not by becoming indolent, becauſe they grew opulent: and I will ſay, that it redounds much to the honour of thoſe landed proprietors, that they ſuffered the ſons to enjoy the fruits of

the labours of their fathers: not but that their rents are now properly increaſed.

This leads me neceſſarily to hint at another obſervation of the author I allude to, who ſeems to lay ſo great a ſtreſs on the national advantage of increaſed rents, and of the old method of calculating the profits of the farmer by the three rents. In the infancy of agriculture, it was a conſcientious and equal partition of property; ſuch as is now practiſed in the leſs enlightened parts of the world; in moſt parts of France, Germany, and in ſome of our American colonies: the one finds land and capital, the other knowledge and labour: but on a well-cultivated and good ſoil, the rent is now the leaſt object: it is the ſum which a man can ſink in ſtock, and in the annual expence of his labour, on which he is to reckon the intereſt of his money, or income. —The ſubject has already led me beyond the intended limits of this Chapter: but in anſwering the author of the above-quoted Pamphlet, on the topic of depopulation, I was naturally led to point out ſome other circumſtances in large farms, in which he ſeemed to be equally mi[illegible]formed.

Let it not, however, be thought that I am ſo abſurd as to propoſe that all England ſhould

ſhould be divided into large, or indeed any particular-ſized farms. I have only endeavoured to refute the abſurd doctrine of thoſe who maintain that large farms have brought on a ruin to the nation, and that the only remedy is to divide the land into ſmall farms. I ſay that there ſhould be, as there are now, farms of all ſizes, to ſuit the different capitals of the people who engage in farming. If ſuch writers as I am ſpeaking of were at all converſant in huſbandry, they would know, as I have already explained, that the proportion of land, which is in ſome degree governed by its value, ſhould be equal to a given capital; and if they were acquainted with the nature of the moſt valuable trade of a nation, they would conſider agriculture in this country to be the firſt object of commerce, and therefore they would ſee that it is as abſurd to confine a farmer with 10,000 *l.* to one hundred acres, as to place a man with 500 *l.* on one thouſand acres. To ſay that a man, who, by induſtry, has increaſed his capital in farming, ſhall ceaſe to be a farmer, is as great a contradiction to common ſenſe; for ſuch prohibition it would be, not to permit a man to employ his capital in the buſineſs he has been brought up to and underſtands. Whatever may be the opinion of theſe gentlemen, I will maintain, that the produce

of the earth is the only wealth of a nation: if corn is our natural produce, corn ſhould be our trade, as gold is that of Peru; and perhaps it is the only trade that cannot be over-done: we do not want inſtances to prove, that artificial trade is often extended to the ruin of a nation: that cannot be the caſe with the produce of the earth: manufactures have a limited conſumption; beſides which, that nation which will not wear your cloth, will eat your corn. Let this manufacture then go on in its uſual courſe: it is in the hands of men who underſtand it better than you do, and, believe me, their own intereſt will tell them what is moſt proper to be done.

CHAP. II.

On Jobbers, Foreſtallers, and Regrators.

AMONG the many who have aſſigned cauſes for the preſent advanced price of proviſions, there are a ſet of men who do not attribute the ſcarcity to either of the aforementioned cauſes, nor do they confine their compaſſion to the Poor only, but extend their pity even to the farmer. Their complaints are poured out againſt jobbers, foreſtallers, and regrators; though I am confident that many of them do not underſtand

ſtand the particular occupation of either of theſe, but confound the whole in one maſs. I confeſs that there are many inſtances in the ſale of cattle at Smithfield, which muſt confirm theſe people in their opinion: a very recent and remarkable one happened on the 16th of November laſt, when oxen ſold at 2 *d.* per pound; and yet there was no viſible alteration in the price of butcher's meat. This would naturally induce them to believe that there is plenty, but that it is withheld by art. It muſt, likewiſe, be obſerved, that ſheep were dearer that very day, than had been known for ſome time paſt. However, as tales are told imperfectly, and too often that part of them only which makes for an argument, I am not ſurprized that well-diſpoſed men are frequently miſled. I ſhall not ſay but that there may be, and is, craft in that buſineſs, as there muſt be in every other where the leaſt reſtriction will always give the attentive artful man an advantage over his neighbour: at the ſame time, it muſt be conceived, that there is in this, as in all other articles, a fluctuation in the price: nor will it be difficult to explain that this fluctuation muſt operate by greater ſtrides in live cattle, than in any commodity which can be depoſited in magazines. All that the wiſdom of legiſlature can do, or ought to attempt, is,

to let thoſe ſtreams of plenty flow from their ſource in their natural channel; for the dam that occaſions ſtill-water above, is ſure to create a torrent below, which carries every thing before it.

To inveſtigate the truth of what is here advanced, I ſhall explain the natural cauſes of this fluctuation in the price of live cattle: this will account for the ſudden fall of beef on the day abovementioned, and prove that it neither could have, nor ought to have, any great effect on the price of butcher's meat: I ſhall then proceed to point out the channel in which the ſupply of live cattle uſed to flow, till it met with a check, which, I believe, has given ſome foundation for a part of the complaints we have heard. In doing this, I ſhall deſcribe the different occupation of each man concerned in this traffick; and from thence it will appear, that the aboliſhing of either muſt eternally produce the evil complained of.

Firſt then, I ſhall inform the Reader, that the fluctuation in the price of live ſtock does, and ever muſt, depend on the quantity there is of the different ſorts of food neceſſary to ſupport thoſe cattle in their different ſtages of age and degree of fatneſs. For example; if after-paſture, fodder and turnips

turnips fail, lean ſtock muſt be cheap, becauſe there will not be purchaſers for them at the fairs; and fat beaſts will, for the ſame reaſon, keep their price, becauſe the grazier knows it will turn to better account for him to beſtow the food he has upon the ſtock which is nearly fit for market, than to divide it among many, which would keep the forward ones too back; nor would it bring the lean ſtock forward enough to make off in the ſpring with any moderate degree of profit. Thus he will conſume the whole with his fattening beaſts, by which means there will not be a ſucceſſion to ſupply the market, and thoſe beaſts which would have come in the ſpring, muſt be kept lean, to another year. This circumſtance, and the ſcarcity of food, which will not allow him to have ſo great a ſtock to employ his capital in, muſt naturally, and ought to give him a greater profit on the few he has. Thus will the courſe of market generally be governed; and I believe it was as generally expected that what I have related would have been the caſe this year; for there was in the ſummer little appearance of graſs, fodder was evidently ſcarce, and cabbages and turnips had failed almoſt every where: but a moſt providentially fine autumn furniſhed the Eſſex and Kentiſh men with ſuch abundance of after-

paſture, that they gave great prices for all cattle that were forward enough to be brought on. This naturally induced them to make off all their ſtock on hand that was fit, or nearly fit, for market, in order that their new ſtock might have ſufficient plenty to puſh them on before the winter ſet in, when they could be able to finiſh them on oil-cake, &c. To this I impute the great and unexpected glut that there was at Smithfield on the Monday alluded to; and what ſtrengthens me in my opinion is, that it was immediately after Kingſton-Fair, where a great number of Welch beaſts were bought up by the Eſſex and Kentiſh farmers. The preſent high price of hay and oil-cakes might indeed have operated in ſome degree, by inducing many graziers to ſend up ſuch of their beaſts as were fit for market, rather than keep them back for the regular ſupply: but as it is not natural to ſuppoſe that this laſt reaſon ſhould have operated with all on the ſame day, I cannot but think my ſuggeſtion right; and what confirms me in it is, that ſheep were dearer that very day than they had been for ſome time paſt. This laſt circumſtance is one reaſon why this extraordinary fall in beef ſhould not have had an immediate effect on the price of butcher's meat: for it is the average of the profits which muſt govern the butcher in his

ſale. But ſuppoſing mutton had been equally cheap, no butcher in London would have purchaſed more than was neceſſary for the demand of his uſual cuſtomers: he could neither keep his beaſts nor his ſheep alive; and if he ſlaughtered them, he ran the riſk of having a great part remain to ſpoil on his hands. Thus the overplus of what was wanted for the uſual conſumption, would be naturally bought up by thoſe who had an opportunity of keeping them on; and was it not for ſuch men, from whence ſhould we now expect a regular ſupply, till thoſe beaſts are brought forward, which are not yet fit for market? Let it not, however, be imagined that all their dealings are attended with ſuch profit; they have ſevere blows, as well as men in other trades: it is the average profit of the whole year on which they count their gain; and however it may be the faſhion to ſtigmatiſe theſe dealers with odious appellations, it is on them alone that we can depend for a regular ſupply. Yet, whilſt I am thus ſpeaking in favour of theſe dealers, I will confeſs that I believe there are among them ſome who, as the laws have lately been enforced, have given too great foundation for the clamours of the people; I mean, when the ſaleſman is the dealer. I know that precautions have been taken to guard againſt this inconvenience,

by

by prohibiting them from holding farms: but it is eaſy to conceive that ſuch a law may be evaded: and I know that it is; and though it be a crime to act in violation of the laws, yet that crime is greatly leſſened, if the enactors of the laws lay temptations in the way, to induce people to act in oppoſition thereto: and this they have done, by aboliſhing what were called Jobbers; the evil conſequences of which I ſhall proceed to explain.

When there were thoſe traders in cattle called Jobbers, Smithfield market was conſtantly and well ſupplied. They were people who had no fixed reſidence, but travelled the country in ſearch of ſuch cattle as were fit for market; and having no land in their own poſſeſſion, as ſoon as they had bought a lot of ſheep, or oxen, they immediately diſpatched them to Smithfield-market, where they were conſequently obliged to be ſold. If ſeveral of theſe happened to meet at the ſame market, which was frequently the caſe, of courſe their cattle were ſold cheap; but they were contented with their chance profit; and ſet out immediately on another journey. If the cattle were ever ſo cheap, the butchers could not buy more than for their uſual conſumption. This neceſſarily called in a ſet

of

of men who had land within a moderate diſtance of the metropolis, and thereby had an opportunity of keeping them on, to ſupply the market regularly. Theſe men naturally ſhould have their profit: but that could not, in general, be great, as they were always liable to have great quantities poured in unexpectedly by the jobbers, whoſe motions were never known, and always uncertain. Thus were the markets always fully ſtocked; the grazier got rid of his cattle, at his door, without trouble or expence; and the butcher was always ſure of finding a market well ſupplied by the jobber, or the intermediate man who had always by him a ſtock that had been purchaſed when the markets were glutted. This was a regular channel of trade, which went on uninterrupted: whereas, when the jobbers were ſuppreſſed, the grazier was obliged either to ſend up his cattle himſelf, or to commit them to the care of a ſaleſman, who, of courſe, became his adviſer when to ſend his ſtock to market; and by this means, being intimately acquainted with the demand and the ſupply, it is natural to believe that ſelf-intereſt, which governs us all, would induce him to become a purchaſer, who had it ſo much in his power to ſupply the butchers as he thought proper, and who, by the ſame knowledge, had it as much in his power to purchaſe his cattle at what price

price he pleaſed to ſet on them: for it required but the combination of a few, to order up the grazier's cattle whenever they wiſhed to make a purchaſe. In this manner has the profit of the latter decreaſed ſo much, as to render it neceſſary for ſome of them to attend Smithfield themſelves, though, when they came there, they could only look on; not having it in their power to ſell to a butcher, who was perhaps as much in the clutches of the ſaleſman as himſelf. By this means we have loſt that intermediate man, ſo neceſſary to all parties, and by this means we have created a real foreſtaller. I will not charge all with being guilty of this practice: there are honeſt men, as well as knaves, in every profeſſion. I have only endeavoured to point out the manner in which this may operate; and I am confident that it will, whenever there is the ſmalleſt reſtriction or interference of legiſlature in any trade; for, as Sir William Mildmay juſtly obſerves, a general liberty granted to raiſe our neceſſary proviſions, will procure us a general plenty for ſale; a general indulgence allowed to this ſale, will reduce them to a general cheapneſs, &c. Happy am I to think we have a Miniſter, whoſe wiſdom has induced him to liſten to ſuch men as can give him real information on a ſubject he cannot be ſuppoſed to be intimately acquainted with himſelf!

CHAPTER III.

On Luxury, as affecting Proviſions and Population.

AMONG the many writers who have favoured us with their productions on the ſubject of Proviſions and Population, there are none who fail to attribute it, in part or the whole, to Luxury. I ſhall not attempt to ſay that Luxury has not an effect on the price of all commodities; among others, on proviſions: but how far it is prejudicial or beneficial to a ſtate, is matter of ſerious conſideration, and ſhould be handled with infinite delicacy whenever the ſubject is taken up by the Legiſlature. It is a known fact, that, in an infant-ſtate, Luxury is a child which ſhould be nouriſhed to ſuch a degree as to procure the conveniencies and comforts of life; for on that depends the improvement of agriculture, arts, manufactures, and commerce. It is as certain a fact, that Luxury is an attendant on wealth, and that, when it is not accompanied with vice, it is a benefit to a nation. By this it is that wealth becomes more equally diffuſed among all ranks of people: it encourages the manufacturer and artificer; and if it is confined to the table of the rich man, agriculture reaps the benefit of it, without any public detri-

detriment: in ſhort, in every inſtance, the poor receive their ſhare of this ſcattered wealth; and in proportion to the luxury of the ſpot, the poor who inhabit are, by the diffuſed riches, enabled to bear their ſhare in the price of proviſions. In proof of what I ſay, draw the compariſon between the labouring poor of the city of London and its neighbourhood, with thoſe of Wales and other remote countries. I do not ſpeak of the worthleſs abandoned poor: they always flock to large cities, and ſubſiſt by charity and theft, where they are not ſo eaſily detected as in the country. This leads me to point out a ſpecies of luxury which I have never heard arraigned, but which, I am confident, does much miſchief, though proceeding from a laudable motive: I mean, that unbounded charity which, when kept within limits, and adminiſtred with prudence, is the noble characteriſtic of the Engliſh nation; but which I have known, in many inſtances, to do much hurt, and encourage idleneſs, inſtead of rewarding induſtry. I ſay, this evil proceeds from luxury, becauſe I fear an oſtentatious vanity is frequently the motive for many whimſical donations.

Why Luxury ſhould be an attendant on wealth is obvious; it is, becauſe money becomes cheap: but in ſuch proportion all

commodities riſe in value. In 1307, when the intereſt of money was 45 *per cent.* all proviſions were what we ſhould now call cheap. In 1604, when the intereſt of money was 9*l.* 16*s.* *per cent.* proviſions roſe in proportion; and ſo on to this day, making proper allowance for the different circumſtances which attended this country when divided by civil wars, or harraſſed by foreign enemies. But as luxury is the conſtant attendant on wealth, it muſt naturally affect proviſions in a greater proportion; for it will create waſte; it induces people of fortune to keep a great number of domeſtic ſervants, who are fed on dainties, inſtead of the coarſe but wholeſome food they were before accuſtomed to; it increaſes the number of horſes which are kept for pleaſure; both which muſt conſiderably increaſe the conſumption of meat and corn. It likewiſe certainly affects proviſions, by the deſtruction of the numberleſs calves and lambs that are ſlaughtered for the London market, which muſt raiſe the price of beef and mutton, as they conſume in three months the amount in value of food which would rear them to two years old. This is, indeed, an encouragement to agriculture, and, as I ſaid before, diſperſes the wealth among all ranks and denominations of people, while the taxes

taxes on luxury properly fall upon the rich, and the land is ſo far relieved of a part of that burthen which muſt be chearfully borne for the ſupport of a great and powerful nation, I mean that part of the taxes which lights on the conſumer, which is all exciſeable commodities. It will here be ſaid, that the waſte on the rich man's table, and the corn conſumed by his horſes, would feed many hungry mouths. I allow it:—but the evil points out a remedy; for if it is the real fact, as I believe it to be, that the conſumption is greater than the produce, cultivate more land, and ſuffer not barren acres to ſtare us in the face when we are crying out for bread.

There is yet another ſpecies of Luxury, which is in conſequence of wealth; it is, that the inhabitants of the country naturally flock to great cities, where they can enjoy the more refined amuſements of a poliſhed nation. The conveniency of trade indeed brings thither the moſt conſiderable part; the neceſſary calling together of the Legiſlature brings another part; and the attachment to courts and other amuſements, brings the third. Theſe neceſſarily carry with them a ſuite of attendants, which I cannot but think miſchievous to a ſtate; for the loitering life of a gentleman's ſervant not only debauches his own mind,

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but, by his attendance on the great, and his intercourſe with the inferior claſs, makes him the vehicle of conveyance of thoſe manners which ruin the induſtrious tradeſman, though neceſſary accompliſhments in the rich. If they unfortunately ſee a bad example, they retail it out with all its miſchievous conſequences; and in this manner does their appearance and example operate when they return with their maſters to the country. They there debauch the minds of the ruſtic labourers, who envy their fine cloaths and lazy life; and by this means too many of the inferior claſs are drawn to towns, where, I muſt confeſs, they do not continue to be ſuch uſeful members in point of population, as if they had remained in the country; for by all the calculations that have appeared, the lives of children in towns bear no proportion with thoſe born and bred up in the country. This neceſſary evil, which attends all great cities, is the natural and inevitable conſequence of wealth. Let us not, however, ſee things in ſo gloomy a light, as to think theſe people entirely loſt to ſociety, or even to that part which depends on agriculture. What I am going to relate is matter of fact within my own knowledge; namely, that in hay and harveſt time, when labourers are wanted in

the country, it is inconceivable what numbers of tradeſmen and handicrafts flock into the country, and as conſiderable is the aſſiſtance we receive from them at the only time they are wanted there. Thus they become doubly beneficial to the nation. The fact is as I ſay, but their motives may be two-fold; the one, that they have not employment at that time of the year; and the other, that nature may dictate to them the deſire of breathing the freſh air they were accuſtomed to in their youth, when they learnt the different branches of huſbandry buſineſs, which they return to at a time when their town employment falls ſlack, and when, as I ſaid before, we only want them.

I am far from being an advocate for wanton Luxury. There have been too many inſtances in hiſtory, to prove that Luxury, accompanied with vice, which is its laſt ſtage, muſt ever end in ruin to a ſtate. All that I mean to alledge is, that Luxury will attend the wealth of a great trading nation, and that what was once a virtue, cannot be converted into a vice. Let thoſe who exclaim againſt the evil effects of Luxury, keep a watchful eye over themſelves, and they will not have cauſe to complain.

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Let thoſe who reſide in the country ſet a good example to the poor inhabitants of the village; let thoſe who have it in their power diminiſh, if poſſible, at leaſt not increaſe, the number of alehouſes, which are perdition to the poor, and the real cauſe of their diſtreſs. I know many pariſhes in different parts of the country where labourers maintain themſelves and families comfortably, even in theſe times, on ſix ſhillings a week; whereas in other places they are ſtarving on nine in winter, and ten to twelve in ſummer. But where the former reſide, there are no alehouſes, and they themſelves attribute their comfort to it: however, where they cannot be eaſily aboliſhed, let the reſtrictive laws attending licences be enforced; prevent gambling, and do not ſuffer them to permit a labouring inhabitant of the pariſh to ſit in their houſes but at the ſtated hours of meal times; this every one has it in his power to prevent; and this I know to be one of the chief cauſes of the diſtreſs of the poor, as hath juſtly been remarked by the Reverend Mr. Powel, of Fakenham, in his *Real Grievances*, &c.

CHAPTER IV.

On the real cauſes of the advanced price of proviſions.

THE real cauſe of the preſent ſcarcity being, in general, too well known to need any formal diſcourſe to aſcertain its origin, it may, perhaps, be thought impertinent in me to undertake that taſk: and, indeed, I honeſtly confeſs, that the original intention of theſe ſheets was only to ſhew, that it is not to be imputed ſolely to any of the various cauſes I have lately ſeen aſſigned for it in print. Moſt of thoſe publications have appeared to me big with miſchief, as blowing the trumpet of diſcontent among every rank of people; and, howſoever inadvertently they may have been ſuffered to creep into the world, they cannot fail to breed, eſpecially among the lower claſs, that rancour and jealouſy which are the mother of riot and confuſion, and which may, if thus fomented, carry them to ſuch lengths as may ſeriouſly increaſe the misfortunes we complain of. My only motive for thus offering to the public my opinion on this head, proceeds from an ardent deſire to rectify, if I can, the ſtrangely miſconceived notion of my countrymen, by proving

ing to them, that it is not to any individual, or ſet of individuals, that we ought to aſcribe this calamity; but that it is the hand of God which has viſited us, and that it is patience only, with a proper exertion of thoſe means which Providence hath put in our power, that can afford us relief. But as I find the numberleſs complaints of the diſſatisfied have reached the ear of the Legiſlature, and that the Parliament ſeem earneſtly diſpoſed to adopt ſuch meaſures as ſhall appear to them moſt ſalutary; I think it the duty of every one who has conſidered this matter candidly, to lay his thoughts open to Government.

Previous to our entering upon this ſubject, it will be neceſſary to examine into the truth of what is daily aſſerted about the price of proviſions, and to determine whether they are, or are not, really dear; and, if found to be dear, how far the price exceeds the bounds of what is deemed an equitable one for the farmer. The only method by which this fact can be aſcertained, is to draw a compariſon between them and other articles of conſumption; for example, if the articles of cloaths, houſe-rent, furniture, luxuries of life, and proviſions, have kept a nearly proportionate

advance for any given number of years, we have the cleareſt proof that there is ſome one general extraneous cauſe which affects the whole; and if it appears that the riſe in the price of all the various commodities bears a juſt proportion to the intereſt of money, it is as ſelf-evident that the general cauſe is the riches of the nation: but to fix this with ſuch preciſion as would carry with it univerſal conviction, would require many *data* not eaſy to be obtained. Thus, among other circumſtances, to make a juſt compariſon, it will be neceſſary that there ſhould have been an equal demand for every article; for on that will depend the value of each. Now as I have declared that ſuch *data* as I would only draw concluſions from are, in my opinion, not to be obtained, I may claim the ſame privilege as others aſſume, of grounding my facts on the general cry, that all the neceſſaries of life are at an enormous price, which, as I ſaid before, muſt proceed from one general cauſe, and that can only be the cheapneſs of money; and therefore, that all commodities bearing that proportion are cheap, at leaſt not dear. However, as an extraordinary demand for, or a ſcarcity of any article, muſt affect that article in a peculiar manner, I will acknowledge that there is an advance in the

the price of proviſions, though not ſo great as is generally believed, nor ſuch as ought to alarm this nation; nor will I ſcruple to pronounce, that this advance has been occaſioned by a real ſcarcity of corn, proceeding from a failure of crops in general; and that, for theſe five years paſt, we have had, at one or other time of the year, the moſt unfavourable ſeaſons for corn that have been known for a long while paſt. To this muſt be imputed the natural cauſe of the dearneſs of all commodities, and among them, of proviſions.

It is the vaſt influx of wealth, which, though the great encourager of agriculture, brings with it an apparent temporary evil. This is the mother of luxury, which as certainly creates waſte, and, by an extraordinary conſumption, undoubtedly affects the markets; as was clearly proved to the Houſe of Lords about nine years ago, in the examination of a perſon who had gone through all the various branches of the butcher's buſineſs, and who attributed the great riſe in meat, in a great meaſure, to the luxury of the town, ſaying, that the tradeſman who formerly was contented with a ſhoulder of mutton, muſt now have his fillet of veal, &c. and by this luxury's deſcending to the loweſt claſs, there were

not thoſe cuſtomers for the offal-pieces, which were conſequently in a manner thrown away. This might be the opinion of a ſingle man; but certain it is, that the conſumption of veal and lamb has increaſed to a prodigious degree; and, as I mentioned before, the expence of the food neceſſary to bring thoſe young animals to market being as much in four months as would maintain them as a breeding ſtock for two years, that muſt undoubtedly have an effect upon all other butcher's meat, and this will as ſurely affect other proviſions, in a certain proportion.

There is yet another manner in which luxury has operated: it has increaſed the number of poſt-horſes within theſe twenty years, as ten to one. The increaſe of ſtage-coaches too has been very conſiderable, as has likewiſe the number of waggon-horſes: theſe laſt, indeed, have been in conſequence of internal trade: yet all theſe are, directly or indirectly, in conſequence of luxury, which has eſtabliſhed ſo many faſhionable places of reſort for people of all ranks and denominations, and in which liſt the city of London has furniſhed no inconſiderable part; for money, which, in a trading nation, puts all men on a level, ſoon teaches the tradeſman and his family

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that they can aſſociate with people of rank and faſhion: thus ſervants, mimicking their maſters and miſtreſſes, as ſoon forget the prudent œconomy of the pantry and cellar, and vye with my lord's butler and my lady's woman in every wanton extravagance, which, fatal as it proves in the end, does not at firſt diſpleaſe the good ſober citizen: but this is the natural channel in which riches ever will and ought to flow. It is by theſe means that the wealth acquired by the trading individual becomes equally diffuſed among all ranks of men: it is extended even to the chimney-ſweeper's boy, who, inſtead of the cruſt of bread which uſed to be his fee, now receives a morſel of meat: but at laſt, though too late, the tradeſman diſcovers that he and his family have purchaſed a reliſh for pleaſure and extravagance with a diminution of his capital. He feels with redoubled force every little blow in trade, becauſe he dares not retrench, from a miſconſtrued pride, and fear of injuring his credit: he ſtretches every ſinew to extend that credit and increaſe his trade: perhaps, at laſt, conſcious that his own will not ſupport his extravagance, he flies to that of his neighbour, who, at the ſame moment, may be getting into his. Thus has trade been over-done, and credit, ſo eſſential for a commercial nation, totally ruined.

ruined. Stock-jobbing, and every ſpecies of gambling, have ſucceeded, and have now brought on a general bankruptcy among thoſe people who were once improperly thought the chief ſupport of this country.

But let not this picture deceive us. It only proves what common ſenſe ought to have taught before, which is, that trade can be extended but to a certain degree, and that the only one which can be beneficial to a nation is the export of the produce of the earth. Such part of it as can be manufactured is undoubtedly doubly advantageous: it maintains a number of men who are the ſtrength of a nation, whilſt foreigners, who buy the manufactured goods, pay their wages, which, in fact, becomes an advanced price upon our corn and meat. But as the demand for goods may be limited, do not let us confine ourſelves to the growth of ſo much corn only as will maintain them, let the ſurplus be exported, and though not attended with ſo much profit, it is always an addition to the other; the returns for which, in merchandize or ſpecie, are our riches. Merchants, neceſſary as they are, are no more than the carriers of thoſe commodities: take them in any other view, they are men preying upon one another: one individual is enriched, while the other is ruined; and whether the

trade

trade is among ourſelves, or with others, ſo ſoon as it exceeds the bounds of our produce and manufactures, it is gambling, and, as in all other games of chance, at the end of the year, the profits will only pay the cards. But miſerable as the preſent ſcene appears, it by no means proves that the country is not rich; it only ſhews how money may be, and how it is, diſperſed and divided among all ranks, and I could prove, happily for this nation, that much of it is ſunk in the bowels of the earth, from which grateful treaſury we are ſure to receive ample returns. The new cultivated lands, and improvements in agriculture, with the great inland navigations, have ſwallowed up immenſe ſums in the purchaſe of corn to feed the labourers. Theſe are the real riches of a country. It would be wrong to imagine, that becauſe ſome few individuals have over-traded themſelves, and want money, therefore the nation is poor; look at the riches that are amaſſed among the farmers, and bleſs yourſelves that it has got into the hands of men who will turn it to a national benefit; while they thrive, the intereſt of your funds will continue low, and land will keep its price; theſe are the only touchſtones of the value of money.

But before I quit this ſubject, let me hint that I do not draw the diſtinction between

between agriculture, manufactures and commerce; I know them all to be ſo dependant on each other, that the prevalence of either is prejudicial to this nation: all I contend for is, that the ſource of the whole is agriculture.

Thoſe who attempt to point out the diſtinct advantage ariſing from either agriculture, manufactures, or commerce, are little acquainted with the true policy of this nation; for if they recollect that the natural produce of this country conſiſts in corn for the uſe of man, and other ſtaple commodities for our manufactures, ſuch as hides, wool, tin, lead, and iron, they will conceive that the labourers of the earth and the manufacturers are ſo mutually dependent one on the other, that to obtain the greateſt national advantage from their reciprocal labours, would almoſt ſeem to demand that a juſt proportionate number of each ſhould be preſerved: I ſay, in point of the profit to be made on the produce of the earth, which is the natural riches of a country, this would ſeem to be the caſe, with an additional number in agriculture to provide food for their own body, and the third claſs, which conſiſts of the navy, army, and idle people: but no advantage could ariſe from ſuch a diſtribution without the aſſiſtance of traders, whoſe buſineſs it is to

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export our manufactured ſtaple commodities, or the ſurplus of ſuch as are not required for the different manufactures in their raw ſtate: in return for theſe, the trader brings us back either ſpecie, or, by way of barter, the luxuries of life, or raw materials for ſome manufactures, which we have not within ourſelves, but are neceſſary for them. In this manner are theſe three claſſes ſo intimately dependant on each other, that neither can exiſt alone in this country, I mean to a national advantage; nor in this view is it eaſy to determine to which ſhould be aſcribed the preference in point of rank: for unleſs we grew our own corn, our manufactures would not be ſo beneficial to the country, nor without manufactures would our corn be exported to ſo great advantage; nor would either be nationally advantageous in point of riches if they could not be exported. This therefore calls in the aſſiſtance of the merchant, whoſe trade would not be beneficial to the nation unleſs his exports conſiſted in the produce of the earth; and in the proportion that ſuch exports exceed the value of his imports, the balance is in favour of this country.

Let it however be obſerved, that the advantage ariſing from this chain of traffic is limited to a certain pitch, beyond which it

cannot extend: it muſt be governed by the demand of foreign markets, which is always regulated by the conſumption, but too often ſubject to the caprice of courts; therefore it is impoſſible to determine the exact proportion of hands proper to be allotted to each different claſs. It muſt then remain an eſtabliſhed maxim, that, as Sir James Stuart has ſo ably ſhewn, each claſs will, from time to time, be ſupplied with the overflowings of the other, as exigencies direct: but it ſhould be remembered, that manufactories can at no time employ more than are requiſite at that particular time to ſupply the demands of trade; whereas the culture of the earth cannot be over-done. If the quantity of corn and cattle produced ſhould, by being too great for the conſumption, reduce the price below what is a reaſonable profit for the farmer, that cheapneſs will create mouths to eat it, that is, men will flock in from different countries to that ſpot where there is the greateſt plenty. This will make us formidable in point of people, and the taxes on what they conſume will increaſe the revenue, ſo as to enable the Government to diſcharge part of its debt, at leaſt enable it to protect its territories, without loading the Poor with a freſh burden. This argument would rather ſeemingly lead to give the preference to agri-

agriculture: but I ſhall contend for no more than to call it the ſpring of the whole machine.

In contradiction to what I have advanced, I am aware that there are thoſe who will ſay, that the whole of my theory is diſproved by the inſtance of Holland. But let ſuch remember, that what I have ſaid relates to the policy of England only, and that though Holland has ſubſiſted and become powerful by trade alone, it has been owing to the very particular circumſtances which have attended the ſituation of the Dutch: they eſtabliſhed themſelves in a little ſwampy corner, hemmed in on all ſides by enemies, whoſe reciprocal intereſt it was to protect them againſt each other: by this means their little ſpot became an aſylum for trade to all parties, and thus they became likewiſe the carriers and bankers of Europe, and by theſe concomitant circumſtances, art has ſupplied them with what nature furniſhes us.

But to return to the ſubject of horſes, which, I am confident, have helped to raiſe the price of proviſions, for they muſt conſume a great part of the produce of the earth, and in a much greater proportion than other cattle, which are not fed ſo highly. Therefore, unleſs it appears that the importation of oats during theſe laſt

twenty years has greatly increaſed, it is evident that either the quantity of other corn grown, has decreaſed, or that more ground has been cultivated, and as certain that unleſs the quantity of graſs land has increaſed in the ſame degree, there cannot remain the ſame proportion for the feeding of young ſteers, as there was before the breeding of theſe additional horſes. With regard to the number that have been exported, as much as it has been exclaimed againſt, ſurely no man who conſiders the matter coolly can ſee it in any other light than as being greatly beneficial to the nation; for whether we export the corn, or the cattle that feed on it, the money received is for the produce of the earth.

We all know that more land has been taken into culture, and that the incloſing of common-field land has increaſed the produce: but, I am apt to believe, not in a proportion equal to the conſumption; and I am farther of opinion, that a greater part has been devoted to the growth of food for horſes: for the extraordinary riſe in the price of oats within theſe twenty years paſt, in which that grain has exceeded all proportion with other corn, and the uniform and ſteady price oats have kept at, are ſuch inducements to a farmer, that it is ſcarcely

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poſſible to believe he would not attend to the growth of that ſpecies of corn, as well as, in the breeding countries, to the raiſing of colts inſtead of ſteers: for a ſerviceable colt, at three years old, with the aſſiſtance of a few pecks of ground meal, will fetch as much as an ox at ſeven, with a whole ſummer's fattening. By theſe methods, I believe, luxury has operated in the riſe of proviſions: but ſurely no man will advance ſo dangerous a doctrine, as to ſay that any thing which encourages agriculture can be prejudicial to a ſtate.

When I conſider the preſent ſtate of this nation, it is evident to me, that our produce, in a middling year, is but barely equal to our conſumption: it is certain, that by the great concourſe of the poorer ſort of people to great cities, the conſumption of wheaten bread is greater than it was when many of theſe fed on barley, rye, or oats: nor has this ſpecies of luxury failed to diffuſe itſelf thro' many country places. It has likewiſe been demonſtrated by many, but particularly by the ingenious author of the Corn-Tracts, that the conſumption of wheat has been nearly equal to the growth, and that, even in the moſt plentiful years, our exports have not amounted to above the value of 947,000*l.* Let thoſe who doubt this fact,

conſult Sir James Stewart's Enquiry into the Principles of Political Oeconomy, vol. I. page 58. If theſe are facts, it is pretty evident to me, that our average crops do but barely equal the conſumption, and conſequently, that, when crops fail, we muſt feel that deficiency. It is therefore not to be wondered at, that if after five ſucceſſive bad years, we ſhould be apprehenſive of want; at leaſt that proviſions muſt riſe. The evil points out its own remedy. If your conſumption is greater than, or but equal to your produce, increaſe the latter, and plenty muſt reduce the price: for though other cauſes may operate in a certain degree, plenty or ſcarcity muſt govern the price of all proviſions. This increaſe can only be produced by a ſenſible encouragement to the farmer, by convincing him that his intereſt is concerned in it, by ſecuring to him a conſtant conſumption for his grain, that he may not be ſubject to ruin by his trade being over-done. As the means of doing this are evident to me, though perhaps not to every one, I ſhall point them out in the following chapter.

CHAPTER V.

On the means of procuring plenty.

MY principal aim in the foregoing pages has been to prove that the preſent advanced price of proviſions is not occaſioned by the ſuppoſed increaſe of large farms, and to explain to the Legiſlature, that though Luxury and Foreſtallers may bear ſome proportion in the cauſe, the chief one is real ſcarcity. For the truth of this, I moſt ſincerely wiſh the Parliament would examine ſuch men, from the different counties of England, as they think they can rely on; for a few partial examinations cannot determine the point; as local circumſtances will ever miſguide. The average of the whole will, I fear, prove what I aſſert; and I am ſtill more concerned to ſay, that it is not ſuſceptible of any preſent relief. All that can be done by Legiſlature, as the laws now ſtand, has been put in force; I mean, the opening of our ports: But where is the corn to come from? In Holland, it is as dear as with us. The ports in Flanders and France are ſhut. In the Baltic, they have been open and ſhut ſeveral times within theſe twelve months. Sicily is ſhut, except for a limited

quantity to be exported for the uſe of the Pope's dominions. In America, wheat is now 5 *s.* 6 *d.* ſterling the buſhel, and cannot be imported here at our price. If theſe facts are true, it will be allowed that there is no great proſpect of immediate relief. Patience is our only reſource. We have had five ſucceſſive bad crops, and this laſt more generally ſo than any of the former. It has been nearly the ſame all over Europe: therefore, till there is a plentiful year, corn cannot be cheap. All that the Legiſlature can do, is to endeavour to guard againſt ſuch an evil befalling us again; and this, in my opinion, is in their power: but, ſalutary as the meaſure may be, it cannot be effectually accompliſhed till corn is plentiful, and nearly at an equal price all over Europe.

But corn is not the only article in proviſions that is thought too dear: meat bears a juſt proportion to it, and till the latter is reduced, it will be vain to expect a fall in the former: in fact, they are, and ought to be, ſo dependant on each other, that the ſame cauſe will produce the ſame effects in each; and it is clear to me, that more land is wanted both for paſture and the plough; for it is not to be diſputed that the number of horſes kept in this country,

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and the number neceſſary for breeding thoſe that are exported, muſt conſume the produce of many of thoſe acres which would be alloted to other purpoſes. This is undoubtedly one of the cauſes of proviſions being riſen in price: but it is an evil attended with ſo great benefit, that it ought to be endured; for it is an encouragement to agriculture, and by whatſoever mode this is encouraged, it will operate every way to the advantage of this country, which ought to conſider huſbandry as the ſource of her wealth and ſtrength.

The caſe is the ſame in regard to the deſtruction of lambs and calves, which certainly conſume as much food as would maintain a much greater number of rearing ſtock: but this is a ſpecies of luxury which, though attended with ſome preſent inconveniencies, muſt be complied with; excepting in particular times, as when a murrain alarms the nation: for, excluſive of the political ſenſe in which the national advantage of agriculture ſhould be conſidered, it is dangerous to check the innocent luxury of a free and wealthy people. The extraordinary incentive which Britons have, beyond all other nations, to exert their ingenuity and induſtry, is a perfect ſecurity for their enjoying the fruits of their

labours as they pleaſe, uncontrouled by any thing but the laws of the land, which ſhould be, and are, a check on thoſe only who wiſh to go beyond the bounds of civil ſociety; for ſurely every one has a right to enjoy his own inherited poſſeſſions; and how much more ſo is that man entitled to ſuch ſecurity, who acquires his by induſtry? Yet this ſecurity encourages luxury, which, in ſome meaſure, increaſes the ſuppoſed evil. Againſt this there is not, in my opinion, any ſalutary remedy. A government may indeed avail itſelf of the folly of men, and raiſe a conſiderable ſum by levying a ſevere tax on poſt-horſes, and other different ſpecies of luxury; but how far that is adviſeable, I humbly ſubmit to Legiſlature. I am confident it would increaſe the revenue, for I am certain it would increaſe the evil, as every man is proud of vying with his neighbour in extravagance: but if it is an evil, let it not meet with ſuch encouragement, and let us attend to thoſe points which only can afford real and conſtant plenty, I mean, the cultivation of more land; for though many waſte acres have lately been brought into culture, it is evident from what has been ſaid above, that the quantity is not equal to the increaſed conſumption: was it otherwiſe, proviſions would be cheap, becauſe they would

would be plentiful; which is the only thing that can counterbalance the effect of riches and luxury. In evidence of what I ſay, let me remind the reader of the price of proviſions, and even dainties, at Bath, to which, though a place of diſſipation, many reſort in order to live cheap.

This being my idea, I ſhall not ſcruple to point out, as the firſt neceſſary ſtep to be taken, the incloſing and parcelling out of all the King's Foreſts and Chaces, which now lie a diſgrace to a Miniſter who wiſhes to be thought to liſten to the complaints of a nation. Let corn ſupply the place of thoſe miſerable pollards, and let flocks and herds ſupplant the half-ſtarved deer which prowl about to tempt poor wretches to the gallows; for it is deer-ſtealing that induces thoſe who are born on the chaces to lead an idle life, which corrupts their morals, and makes them the terror of every honeſt man in their neighbourhood. Their example likewiſe corrupts many who might otherwiſe, probably, be uſeful induſtrious ſubjects. By this a miniſter would entail immortal honour on his adminiſtration, and at the ſame time that the poor would be employed and fed, the coffers of his Royal Maſter would be filled. The taſk is not in reality ſo very arduous as ſome may

imagine, nor need the Miniſter who undertakes it fear the reſentment of thoſe who derive to themſelves emoluments from the preſent uſeleſs and deſolate ſtate of thoſe otherwiſe truly valuable lands. Penſions for their lives, far ſuperior to what they can ever make by their foreſt-tenures, may be ſecured to them, and yet a triple reſidue be left to their Prince, who, in the preſent ſtate of thoſe lands, can reap no other benefit from them than that of providing for a good ſervant, and that too in a manner which no good man would wiſh.

To anſwer the intended good purpoſe, the undertaking muſt be conducted with judgment, and a ſtrict attention to juſtice. Let then the firſt ſtep be the bringing a bill into Parliament, to oblige the ſeveral pariſhes and perſons who have right of commonage, &c. upon the King's foreſts, to aſcertain thoſe rights, and to mark out ſuch boundaries as ſhall be equivalent for them, and let the turn of the ſcale be in their favour; for the purpoſe of the public will be equally anſwered if theſe lands are but appropriated: they will then by degrees come into culture. Such rights as ſhall not be aſcertained within a certain limited time, to be ſettled by commiſſioners appointed by Parliament; and what ſhall

afterwards

afterwards remain to the Crown, may be diſpoſed of in the following manner;

Allot to each cottager his few acres, and to each little farmer ſuch proportion as he can conveniently add to his farm; if many of theſe two claſſes are near each other, they will form an uſeful village: then let the more open parts be divided into lots of one hundred acres, and be put up to auction on ſuch terms as the Crown can grant, either for three lives, or upon leaſes of thirty-one years, renewable every ſeven years. When I ſay, lots of one hundred acres, I do not mean to confine every purchaſer to a ſingle lot: let every man purchaſe what tract he pleaſes; for, certainly, it is from the opulent man that the greateſt benefit is to be expected; but to ſecure that benefit, let it be a condition, that within a certain number of years, the whole of each man's purchaſe ſhall be in culture, on pain of forfeiture of his whole purchaſe, with every partial improvement that has been made thereon. This will ſecure to the Crown ſuch purchaſers as can accompliſh what they undertake, and will prevent the land's being bought up by any rich individual who may wiſh to preſerve it for deer and moor-game: theſe are truly monopolizers of lands, and not thoſe who,

employing

employing 10,000 *l.* in agriculture, can, and do, make land produce more than the little farmer who can barely ſubſiſt: however, both are neceſſary; for as I have before ſaid, every man's farm ought to be in proportion to his capital, and thus both are equally uſeful to the community. I repeat this to ſhew, that though I think the little farmer neceſſary, I would not wiſh the opulent one to be excluded; and under the reſtrictions I have mentioned, no evil can enſue; for though theſe laws are not enforced at the diſtance of America, yet here they might with eaſe. Let every poſſible encouragement be given to the undertakers: let the firſt fine be in lieu of ſo many years rent, which ſhould not commence before the ſeventh year; let theſe lands remain for ever free from tythe, &c. making a proper proviſion for the church by an allotment of a certain number of acres; and for the encouragement of cattle, let thoſe who work oxen be exempted from a certain proportion of rent: that may once more introduce the uſe of thoſe noble animals. Encouragement may prevail; but taxes and reſtrictions operate too haſtily and too harſhly, and will never anſwer any good end in a free country. Let but the experiment be made in one ſingle chace or foreſt, and by the effect of that let the reſt be governed.

Let

Let an accurate ſurvey be made, and the different lots delineated: this will be the only expence that will attend it; for each lot will find its value. The only reſtriction I would annex to the tenure ſhould be, that thoſe lots which were converted into arable land ſhould, within a certain number of years, have a barn and two cottages erected on them; or, if intended for graſs, ſheds and cottages ſuitable to the quantity of land. Let all the trees, excepting only ſuch as might be picked out for his Majeſty's yards, and which ſhould be previouſly marked, be included in the purchaſe-money of the lot on which they ſtand. This will be a reciprocal advantage to both: it will, on the one hand, ſave the expence of removing them, and it will enable the tenant either to preſerve ſome in caſe of paſture land, or he will have wood on the ſpot to erect the neceſſary buildings. If ſuch a plan as this ſhould ever take place, it would bring in a conſiderable revenue to the Crown, and ſet a noble example to gentlemen of landed property to convert their many barren acres into uſeful paſture or corn-fields.

A better authority can no where be produced to ſupport my arguments on this occaſion,

occaſion, than that of the illuſtrious Mr. Evelyn, in his *Sylva*. His advice on this ſubject does honour to the country that gave him birth. His deſcription of our foreſts, in a quotation from Lawſon, points out their deplorable ſtate in too lively colours; nor have we reaſon to think they have been improved in the courſe of theſe laſt hundred years. "In our foreſts (ſays he) you ſhall have for one lively thriving tree, four, nay ſometimes twenty-four, evil thriving, rotten, and dying trees; and inſtead of trees, thouſands of buſhes and ſhrubs. What rottenneſs, what hollowneſs, what dead arms, withered tops, curtailed trunks; what loads of moſs, dropping boughs, and dying branches, ſhall you ſee every where!"

On this Mr. Evelyn juſtly obſerves, that the condition they are in ſpeaks them to be the property of a broken and decaying freeholder; and adds, "Let not then the Royal patrimony bear a bankrupt's reproach."

But when I quote ſuch an author, let me here give his opinion of the mode in which he thinks thoſe tracts can be made moſt uſeful to the public.

"There

" There is not, ſays he, a cheaper, eaſier, or more prompt expedient to advance ſhip-timber, than to ſolicit that in all his Majeſty's foreſts, woods, and parks, the ſpreading oak, &c. be cheriſhed by plowing and ſowing." He ſuppoſes the royal foreſts to contain about 200,000 acres, and after pointing out the method of improving them, concludes in the following words: " The " care of ſo public and honourable an en- " terprize is a right noble and royal under- " taking; and I do pronounce it more " worthy of a Prince who truly conſults " his glory in the higheſt intereſt of his " ſubjects, than that of gaining battles or " ſubduing a province."

Mr. Evelyn has ſo properly recommended a provident care of timber for the navy, and ſo judiciouſly pointed out the method in which it ſhould be managed, that I cannot but hope ſome attention may be paid to the inſtructions of ſo juſtly-celebrated a man: therefore all that I ſhall propoſe to myſelf here will be to make my plan coincide as much as poſſible with his ideas. He tells us, that to procure good timber, every oak ſhould ſtand ſingle, and that the frequent plowing of the ground will cheriſh and nouriſh the roots ſo as to make the tree thrive amazingly: but, though it is with

the utmoſt diffidence that I ſhall venture to offer an opinion in competition with him, I cannot help remarking, that if his plan is properly executed over the whole foreſt, all thoughts of converting it into arable muſt drop, for the ſhade of thoſe trees diſpoſed as he recommends would render it unfit for corn; and it is as certain, that if they were confined to hedge-rows they would not become ſuch fine timber, for the ditches, which would naturally be cloſe to them, muſt prevent the extenſion of ſome of their roots, and the buſhes and briars would injure them by excluding the air from their trunks. I would therefore propoſe, that half of the land be dedicated to paſture, where the trees might ſtand ſcattered over the fields, and the diſtance which Mr. Evelyn allots them would rather benefit than prejudice the paſturage, as well as afford ſhade for the cattle. By conſtant feeding, the ground will certainly be enriched, and if it is likewiſe kept free from buſhes, I cannot ſee why the trees upon it ſhould not thrive nearly, if not quite, as well as if it was cultivated by the plough, which operation could be almoſt ſolely for their benefit, as the crops that might grow there would, I doubt, ſcarcely repay the expence of labour. The remaining half of the ground would be ſufficient to grow corn

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for the inhabitants of the foreſt, who could not be very numerous under this culture, together with cabbages, turnips, and fodder for the beaſts in the winter: thus, ſuppoſing, as Mr. Evelyn does, that there are two hundred thouſand acres of land in the foreſts, &c. one hundred thouſand of them will be paſture. To the four trees which he allots to each acre, making in all 400,000 trees, I ſhall add in the intermediate ſpaces, an equal number for ſucceſſion; and I would have all the paſture land be-ſurrounded by a nurſery well ſecured with double fences.

This is the way in which, I think, the foreſts and chaces may be converted to the greateſt uſe: for whether they are employed in breeding and fattening of cattle, or in growing of corn, they will equally anſwer the intended purpoſe of producing plenty; and in this manner a valuable treaſure will be kept up for the navy. As to the mode of accompliſhing it, that requires only determination; for the buſineſs is then done. Let the conditions of planting, fencing, and preſerving, be annexed to the leaſe, under a forfeiture of it upon non-compliance with the terms; and in conſideration of the trouble and expence of preſerving the trees and nurſeries, let there be

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a proportionate deduction in the rent. An annual ſurvey, by an honeſt man, would eaſily enforce the execution of whatever might be propoſed.

If what I have thrown out on this ſubject ſhould either coincide with the general opinion, or afford any hint for a better plan, I ſhall think myſelf happy. But at the ſame time that I deliver theſe as my ſentiments in regard to the advantage which would accrue to the Public from the incloſure and cultivation of the royal foreſts and chaces, I confeſs that it is without even the ſmalleſt hope of ever ſeeing any part of this plan put in execution. Many difficulties, which muſt be obvious to every one who knows the diſtribution of places dependant on theſe foreſts, ſeem almoſt inſuperable.—I therefore beg leave to offer another plan, one that is practicable, and which cannot fail to do honour to the adminiſtration of the Miniſter who ſhall effect it. Let a ſum of money be voted to his Majeſty, to purchaſe a tract of land on the moors, and let this land be put into the hands of an intelligent induſtrious man, to improve it; and let the profit be his reward. The ſum thus ſunk will be the only expence incurred by Government; and ſuch an

an example to men of landed property will be truly worthy of a great King.

When I appear ſo ſtrenuous an advocate for cultivating waſte lands, it may readily be believed, that I ſhall recommend as ſtrongly the giving of every poſſible encouragement to incloſing bills. Let not the miſtaken zeal of well-diſpoſed, but ignorant people, perſuade the man of ſenſe that it is prejudicial to the Poor. Create but work for them, and their numbers cannot be too great; nor will they want bread. The benefit which they are ſuppoſed to reap from commons, in their preſent ſtate, I know to be merely nominal; nay, indeed, what is worſe, I know, that, in many inſtances, it is an eſſential injury to them, by being made a plea for their idleneſs; for, ſome few excepted, if you offer them work, they will tell you, that they muſt go to look up their ſheep, cut furzes, get their cow out of the pound, or perhaps ſay they muſt take their horſe to be ſhod, that he may carry them to a horſe-race or cricket-match. The firſt is plauſible; but I am ſorry to ſay merely ſo, becauſe the benefit which the ſheep are of either to himſelf or the country is not an object worth notice: the little care that ſuch people can take of them, frequently occaſions the loſs of their lambs,

and the difficulty, nay indeed impoſſibility, of ſupporting them in the winter, is the death of the few ſcrubby things which have been eating the graſs that would have maintained an uſeful flock: but if there is a farmer in the neighbourhood who does keep a flock, then the benefit which the cottager would have, even in the ſummer, muſt vaniſh; for if there is a ſhepherd to this flock, he will take care that his ſheep have the beſt of the feed; and what is more remarkable, though true, is, that if a large flock are daily turned out on a common by themſelves, they only will receive the benefit of it, and the common ſheep will fly before them to ſeek their miſerable ſuſtenance among the buſhes and furzes. It is on this account that our commons, circumſtanced as they generally are, without limitation, are advantageous only to the moſt conſiderable men of the pariſh; whereas, if they were incloſed, they would produce twice the quantity of food if reſerved for paſture, becauſe the furzes would be grubbed up; or if they were divided, they would produce their proportion of corn. I mention theſe trivial circumſtances in anſwer to ſome gentlemen who, I am convinced, oppoſe incloſures from a laudable ſpirit of taking care of the Poor, which I would propoſe doing in a much more

more effectual manner in all future inclosures.

My plan is, to allot to each cottage three or four acres, which ſhould be annexed to it without power of alienation, and without rent; but under the covenant of being kept in graſs, except ſuch ſmall part as ſhould be neceſſary for a garden: this would keep the cottager in more plenty than a very extenſive range of common: he and his family muſt then cultivate the garden, or ſuffer as they ought to do: and to obviate the plea of their wanting fuel, let it be fenced and planted with aſh and other quick growing trees, at the expence of thoſe who are to have the property of the common. This would be a real benefit to him, as it would employ his wife and children, and help to ſupport his family whilſt he is at work for the farmers in the neighbourhood, inſtead of depending, as they too often do, upon the ſuppoſed profits of their commonage. The commons in the pariſh of Chailley in Suſſex afford remarkable inſtances of what I advance. Mr. Young obſerves, in Vol. iii. p. 153, of the Farmer's Tour, that in that pariſh the rates are 9*s.* in the pound; and on enquiry into the cauſe of it, found, that it was owing to the extenſiveneſs of the commons, which

induced many to rely on the cows and ſheep they could keep, to exempt them from labour; the conſequence of which was their coming on the pariſh upon any loſs they ſuffered in their cattle, having acquired that idle habit which would not permit them to work. Inſtead of this, an induſtrious life leads them to a knowledge of thoſe real and reaſonable comforts which I wiſh them to enjoy; ſuch as, a good dwelling decently furniſhed, they and their children well fed and clad; and if theſe laſt are early brought up to honeſt labour, inſtead of pilfering, there cannot be a better ſecurity for their not becoming a burden to the pariſh.

I am aware that there may be objections ſtarted to what I have now propoſed, by ſaying, that though this land may be ſecured to the preſent occupier, yet it will be in the power of the landlord, provided it is not the cottager's own, to raiſe the rent, or that, when the cottagers families grow up, and more cottages are built, the ground being all diſpoſed of, there will not remain any to annex to the new cottages. In my opinion, theſe difficulties are eaſily obviated; for as the landlords are to be benefited by their proportion of the common, they may, by the ſame act, be reſtrained from raiſing the rents of the old ones; and

as the land-holders are the only people who will build, or grant building leaſes, they may be obliged in future to annex to each new-erected cottage an equal proportion of land.

There is indeed one other reſtrictive clauſe which I would add to theſe incloſing bills, I mean when commons are to be converted into arable land: it is, that for every hundred acres of arable land, the proprietor ſhould be obliged to erect a barn and threſhing-floor; for confident I am that there are frequently large tracts of land which have not a ſufficient number of them, and that by this means the farmer is often accuſed of retaining his corn, when in fact he cannot threſh it out ſo faſt as he would wiſh to do.

Another improvement in which legiſlature can interfere, is the incloſure of common-field land, which I know requires their cordial aſſiſtance as much, if not more, than the commons I have been ſpeaking of; for, in the preſent ſtate of thoſe lands, they are not capable of producing half what they would otherwiſe do, unleſs indeed the whole belongs to ſome very few, who are ſenſible enough to agree among themſelves on a good mode of culture; but

this is rarely the caſe: and though it may appear ridiculous to ſome of my readers that I enter ſo minutely into the little detail of farming, I cannot refrain from enumerating the many diſadvantages which attend their preſent ſituation, that I may be the better able to point out the benefit that would accrue to the nation if they were incloſed and properly divided. The general face of ſuch common-fields, being divided into narrow ſlips, makes it obvious to every traveller, whether converſant in farming or not, that they belong to different tenants, and it is a certain fact, that, frequently, a man who rents one hundred acres will not have ten acres adjoining to each other, but, often, ſcattered over the whole tract in ſmall parcels, ſometimes ſo ſmall as half acres, but often in ſingle acres. It will not require much rhetoric to prove, even to a man not converſant in the buſineſs, that this muſt occaſion great loſs of time in ſending the horſes and men from ſpot to ſpot, in plowing, carting, or in harveſt time; nor is it neceſſary to demonſtrate, that waſte of labour is waſte of produce. Beſides, by theſe ſmall diviſions there is generally a real waſte of land, and in many countries a very conſiderable one, commonly called *balks*. Theſe balks are of different widths, from two to ſixteen feet:

they

they are never ploughed, but are kept in graſs, under pretence of their being common-field paſture. They are, literally, of no benefit to either the occupier or the Poor; for they are too narrow either to mow, or to graze without a boy to attend each beaſt with a halter; and when the corn is off, their graſs is too old to feed: nor ought the common-field to be kept open till it is conſumed, for that muſt prevent putting in wheat in the proper ſeaſon, and is a total prohibition of turnips and cabbages, often ſo neceſſary to the farmer, and conſequently to the country. Likewiſe, the encouragement which the plough gives to the ſides of theſe balks encourages the graſs and other weeds to run into the farmer's corn-land. In many inſtances too, where a bad courſe of huſbandry prevails, and while the common-field tenure is ſuch that the whole muſt be governed by the cuſtom of the field, it prevents all improvement let an individual be ever ſo induſtrious: it will be ſaid that he has his land accordingly; but that is what I lament.

Can there be a clearer proof of the national advantage of incloſing and properly dividing the land, than that the farmer will chearfully give double the rent for the ſame land when incloſed? Does not this point out, that he can make it produce

more; and is it not as clear that the nation muſt be benefited by that increaſe?

I ſhould not have dwelt ſo long on this tedious ſubject, but that I am perſuaded plenty is wanting, and that theſe are the moſt likely means to procure it: when that is done, then, and not till then, is the time for the legiſlature to take up the great object of a free port for corn: then, let every act that regards the corn laws be repealed; make the trade free and open for export or import at all times and on all occaſions, without the leaſt reſtraint; aboliſh every port-charge, nay even the ſmalleſt incumbrance: let corn flow like water, and it will find its level. Then, and by that means only, will be introduced a ſet of traders which this country never knew; I mean, *Corn-Merchants*, who will moſt chearfully embark in a commerce where ſo quick returns are made. Watchful of their neighbours, and attentive to their own intereſt, they will not miſs an opportunity of ſupplying the market that is in want. If corn is plentiful here and ſcarce abroad, they will export: that will naturally give a ſtart to the market, and the riſe of the market will as naturally ſtop the exportation. Thus will the price of corn always be nearly on an equal footing, and not ſubject to the great variations which muſt

muſt ever be the conſequence when the opening or ſhutting of the port depends on the price at Bear-key, where an artificial riſe or fall may ever miſlead the Legiſlature, while a few individuals will reap the ſole benefit of what is calculated for a national advantage; not without danger, ſometimes, of bringing on a famine: whereas if the corn-trade was perfectly free, men of capital would engage in it, and the price of corn would be as well regulated and as well known as the price of exchange, which is alternately in favour of London, Amſterdam, Hamburgh, and Cadiz, as circumſtances direct, and in which there cannot be any craft. The balance would, from time to time, be in favour of the exporter. This is a fact, and as well known as that the courſe of exchange points out in whoſe favour is the balance of trade; which is, in other words, that the country which exports moſt of its own produce, muſt have the greateſt remittance made to it.

The dread which ſome may have of monopolies, cannot bear an argument; for, by the account lately laid before the Houſe of Commons, the yearly produce of wheat alone is ſaid to be 4,000,000 of quarters, which I believe far ſhort of the reality *; but

* See *Young*'s Northern Tour, vol. IV. p. 349.

but even that quantity, at 30 *s.* a quarter, would amount to 6,000,000 *l. per ann.* Will any man, or ſet of men, dream of ſuch a monopoly? eſpecially as, if it ſhould take place, it could not fail of being doubled in a few years; for as it is the ſteady and uniform price of a commodity which engages the real merchant, ſuch as this country once knew, to embark his capital, believe me, the ſame would operate with the farmer. Let us not run away with a notion that the growth of corn is not to be adopted as a ſyſtem of trade, as much as the growth of rice, or ſugar-canes. Whatever may be the opinion of men in great cities, I know it ought to be, I know it is; for there is not a good farmer in any country, who has not a regular ſyſtem in his buſineſs, and who does not adopt an uniform courſe of crops. In confirmation of what I ſay, look to Norfolk, where the courſe is regularly turnips, barley, clover, wheat: Does not this prove, that the farmer prefers a regular certain profit to the chance-gain of ſpeculative huſbandry? Is it not then as evident, that the farmers would prefer the reaſonable profits of a ſteady market, to the preſent uncertainty which keeps them in conſtant alarm? and with how much more pleaſure would they deal with the open fair trader, from whom they could not fail having

having the price of the market, than with the preſent ſpeculators, of whom they are ever jealous, and always ſuſpicious that when ſuch buyers appear in markets, ſome ſudden riſe is expected? But without allowing them this degree of common ſenſe, and even ſuſpecting them of the practice of retaining their corn, the freedom of the trade in which ſuch capitals would be engaged would force their corn to market: exportation would induce them to ſend it thither; and importation would render their ſcheme of retention abortive. I have juſt mentioned theſe few circumſtances relative to the farmer, to prove that the freedom of the trade muſt encourage agriculture, and that the natural conſequence muſt be an increaſe in the produce: if ſo, it is as evident that England muſt always have a ſurplus to export, and the national advantage that will accrue therefrom cannot, I believe, require explanation.

To thoſe whoſe views do not extend beyond the bellies of the poor, I ſhall produce a ſtronger argument. Look up to Amſterdam, and wonder how that city, with every natural diſadvantage that can attend the corn-trade, has, for many years paſt, been the magazine of Europe; comparatively ſpeaking, without a blade of corn growing

growing in its country, with one of the worſt ports in the German Ocean, the *Texel*, and with a mud-bank within two leagues of the city, namely the *Pompus*, which will not float a veſſel even of two hundred tuns, except in ſpring-tides; wonder, I ſay, that this city ſhould ſupply all Europe. The reaſon is, that there the trade is free, and there the moſt wealthy people of the country are corn merchants. I ſpeak within bounds when I ſay, that one half of the trade of the city of Amſterdam is corn. Corn was as plentiful there, and as cheap as it had been for ſome years before, when, in 1767, England was under the greateſt apprehenſions of a famine; and when it was neceſſary to take, during the receſs of Parliament, a ſtep which this country cannot yet have forgot.

In anſwer to this it may be aſked, By what accident then were the Dutch in ſuch diſtreſs for corn the laſt year? The reaſon is obvious: too great ſecurity will ſometimes put men off their guard; unuſed to know the want of corn, they might inadvertently go too great lengths before they perceived the miſchief; the intended monopoly of the courts of Vienna and Berlin, added to the diſtreſs of Poland, might increaſe the general ſcarcity, and prevent their

their uſual ſupplies. The like could not probably befal us, who are naturally ſo averſe to the idea of monopolizing, and conſequently would be ever on the watch. Beſides, our ſupplies are within ourſelves, and would, I am confident, annually increaſe.

I am aware that there is another ſort of men who would oppoſe the free exportation on a more plauſible foundation, namely, the danger of our manufacturers wanting bread, and being thereby rendered uſeleſs ſubjects, as the raiſing of their prices would fix a prohibition on their goods in foreign markets. To theſe I ſhall reply, that profuſe plenty in manufacturing towns does not produce more labour, but the contrary. It is a fact well known to thoſe who are converſant in that matter, that ſcarcity, to a certain degree, promotes induſtry, and that the manufacturer who can ſubſiſt on three days work, will be idle and drunken the remainder of the week. I ſhall proceed yet farther, and ſay, that thoſe manufactures in which foreigners cannot vye with us, will go abroad under every diſadvantage that may attend them in regard to price; ſuch as Sheffield and Birmingham hard-wares—France muſt and will have them at any rate. In proof of

what

what I ſay, we have continued to ſupply that country with them, notwithſtanding their threat when Mr. C. Townſhend was Chancellor of the Exchequer, that unleſs we would permit the importation of cambricks, &c. they would prohibit the uſe of our hard-ware, and ſome other of our manufactures. So it will ever be with our woollen manufactures of Norwich, Leeds, Exeter, Colcheſter, and Saliſbury; conſiſting in bays, druggets, long-ells, ſhalloons, duroys, flannels, &c. theſe will go to Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Germany, and even into the South of France through Genoa. Ruſſia and the Northern parts muſt have the Leeds manufactory; and Holland and Flanders ſome particular articles in conſiderable quantities. And let it be obſerved, that theſe articles are the moſt beneficial objects in our woollen manufactory, being made of all Engliſh wool, whereas broad-cloth muſt be part Spaniſh. As to the trade to the Levant, which we have loſt, it has not been owing to the price, but to the cloth being of an improper quality. France, which has been long in the uſe of making the thin cloths which are required at that market, muſt have the trade; whilſt our manufacturers, ignorantly and obſtinately perſiſting in making that ſtrong cloth which we pride ourſelves in,

cannot ſell a piece. Many attempts have been made to obtain the thin cloth; ſamples have been ſent over to our merchants; the Society of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, throw out premiums, but all to no purpoſe. Not that this was the only cauſe of our loſing that part of the Levant trade, for, notwithſtanding the precautions at Blackwell-hall, frauds were committed by our traders that did diſhonour to this nation. However, allowing every advantage which attends the exportation of our manufactures, in which the corn that fed the manufacturers is exported to double advantage, by feeding thoſe men whoſe labours we export, it will be agreed, that the demand for our manufactures is limited, and that, under particular treaties of commerce, or ruptures with ſtates, a total prohibition of them may take place. That never can be the caſe with corn; a remarkable inſtance of which appeared in the year 1748, when the French, though at war with us, contracted for 400,000 quarters. There cannot be a more glaring proof than this, of the great national benefit that would attend the free exportation of grain; and if that can be done, with as great a certainty of having corn cheap at home, is not that country mad, who have it naturally in their power, and will not

adopt

adopt the ſcheme. That plenty, and a more equal price, which I will maintain is the great encouragement to the farmer, has been produced by exportation, no man who has read the hiſtory of this country can deny.

In 1689, an act paſſed to give a bounty on the exportation of corn, with repeal of cuſtoms on exportation. The wiſe intention of the Legiſlature is evident; it was to increaſe agriculture, I mean the plough, for that had ever been neglected; the natural conſequence of a continued ſcene of inteſtine broils. What was the conſequence? Corn became cheaper, and was reduced from 2*l.* 4*s.* 4*d.* to 1*l.* 15*s.* 1*d.* in 1756. The wiſdom of this law, and its ſalutary effects during a courſe of ſeventy years, ſufficiently proves the ſtrength of my argument, namely, that exportation, which is conſumption, will encourage agriculture, that this will produce plenty, and that plenty muſt naturally reduce the price. The facts which I allude to have been accurately ſtated, and the advantages ariſing from the exportation of corn clearly proved by the author of the Corn Tracts, from whom I differ in opinion only with regard to retaining the bounty, and allowing any reſtraint whatever in the corn-

trade. A perfect freedom is all that is now requiſite; but that freedom ought to be without the leaſt check or controul: the very motive for inſtituting the bounty, proves that it is now needleſs.

In former years, when England was divided into many little principalities, and conſequently in eternal warfare, flocks and herds were the natural riches of the people, as being eaſily removed: the plough was of courſe neglected. In the year 1537, the ſize of flocks was limited to 2000, and in 1547 it was reduced to 1550. This was done to encourage the plough; and to the ſame end commons were incloſed. In 1563, the exportation of corn was allowed, and this continued in force, under different modes, till 1688, when a bounty thereon was firſt granted. Thus was agriculture firſt nouriſhed; and of ſuch conſequence was it deemed in a national light, that a bounty was given to the farmer to indemnify him in an undertaking which might afterwards prove beneficial to the nation. In ſhort, that wiſe legiſlature knew that the produce of the earth, whether gold, lead, or corn, was the riches of the ſtate, and it was a ſenſible encouragement to the ſubject to ſearch for thoſe riches in the bowels of the earth. In no other light could it

be ſeen: for if it was ſuppoſed that the huſbandman could only continue to ſupport himſelf by his labour, and that there would be no ſurplus to export, or that foreigners ſhould be bribed to purchaſe that ſurplus at an equivalent to the value of the national gain, what benefit could enſue? It was evidently meant, as in the whale and herring fiſhery, to indemnify adventurers in a hazardous undertaking: but when that undertaking ceaſes to be hazardous, and the trade is become beneficial, the encouragement is no longer neceſſary. Such is now the ſituation of our agriculture; and happily for this country it is in ſo flouriſhing a ſtate, that all the farmer requires is perfect liberty to ſell when and where he pleaſes: but that cannot take place, unleſs the ſame free liberty be given to people to become purchaſers, which can never happen ſo long as the leaſt reſtraint hangs over the trade. The merchant, who engages his capital, muſt be as uncontrouled in the ſale as in the purchaſe, and the benefit which the nation is to expect from the interference of the merchant naturally is, that he will ſettle proper correſpondencies abroad, as well as that he will be intimately acquainted with the ſtate of our markets at home; in ſhort, he will be in corn, what the great remittancer is in bills of exchange: but if we

are to expect the merchant to import when he finds the nation is in want of it, a ſecurity muſt be given to himſelf and his correſpondents, that their property is ſafe, and that if their corn comes to a bad market, they ſhall have liberty to take it back again, and not be treated in the manner they were in 1767: for when their cargoes then came into the river, the factors took the alarm, and ſunk the price below what the foreign corn could be ſold at: nor were the importers ſuffered to carry it out again; but here their corn lay till it was damaged, and ſold to feed hogs. This muſt ever be the caſe with a partial opening or ſhutting of the ports. An artificial price, made for the purpoſe by deſigning ſchemers, may ever miſguide; nor can legiſlature rely on the information they are likely to obtain, at leaſt not in ſo ſhort a time as may be requiſite; and under theſe circumſtances, depend on it, foreigners will ever be averſe to ſend us corn; for if, as in the abovementioned inſtance, they are only to be made uſe of as tools to check the villainy of our own traders, they will not ſubmit to it; but if the trade was perfectly open, they would deal with us in that as in other commodities.

How much more favourably are we ſituated than the Dutch to ſupply all Europe

with corn! But to do that there muſt not be the ſmalleſt incumbrance whatever on the trade; not even the ſlighteſt port-charge. Let freight and inſurance be the only burthen. Theſe, for exportation, are, in time of peace,

	Freight.	Inſurance.
To Liſbon, Cadiz,	from 12 to 15*s.* *per* Ton. —	from 1 to 1 ¼ *per Cent.*
Barcelona, Alicante, Malaga,	—— 15 to 18*s.* ditto. —	1 ½ *per Cent.*
Genoa, Marſeilles, Leghorn, Naples,	—— 17*s.* 6*d.* to 20*s.* ditto. —	1 ½ *per Cent.*

Thus the average of freight would be about 16*s.* per ton, or 4*s.* per quarter, excluſive of from 1 to 1 ½ *per cent.* inſurance. A ſaving of this to the exporter, with any riſe of our market, would naturally ſtop too great an exportation. To prove the probability of what I aſſert, let any one examine Mr. Cook's corn-tables as publiſhed by authority of parliament. It will be found, throughout the whole of them, that, all along the coaſt where corn has been ſhipped off to ſupply the London market, and under that pretence, with ſtill greater advantage to France, corn has been uniformly cheaper than in the inland counties. There may, indeed, likewiſe be other reaſons for it; but I am confident the chief one is,

that there being a conſtant demand, a conſtant ſource of plenty flows in; and though the temptations to ſhip off have been great, a ſaving of freight and inſurance has been thought an adequate profit to the merchant.

I am aware that, though there may be ſome who will agree with me that exportation will encourage agriculture, and conſequently produce plenty, yet others will ſay, that free importation may be as great a check, and under particular circumſtances ruin the farmer, and thus affect the landed intereſt; that is, if by chance crops ſhould fail in this country, and there ſhould be univerſal plenty every where elſe, corn might be imported at a much lower price than the farmer could afford to ſell it for; this might occaſion a loſs to him, which this country cannot wiſh, nor ought to permit; for it would naturally be a total diſcouragement to tillage.

Let us ſee how this matter is likely to operate. The only country, in my opinion, from whence we can apprehend ſuch an importation is America; where, ſome ſay, they can afford to export at 20*s.* but to this muſt be added, commiſſion, freight, inſurance, wharfage, waſte, and damage.

	l.	*s.*	*d.*
Thus then ſuppoſe wheat	1	0	0
Commiſſion 2 ½ *per cent.* -	0	0	6
Freight - - -	0	8	0
Inſurance 2 ½ *per cent.* -	0	0	6
Wharfage - - -	0	0	6
Waſte and damage, 10 *per cent.* -	0	2	0
No average is paid by the underwriter for damage to the corn, unleſs the ſhip is ſtranded.			
To this muſt likewiſe be added the difference of the value between the corn grown here and that which has been ſo long on board ſhip: this cannot be leſs than - -	0	2	6
	1	14	0

On the other hand, I am informed that the average price at which wheat has been brought from America to our market is nearer 48 *s.*

However, let us conſider at what price the farmer can afford to ſell under the different circumſtance of good and bad crops, in which I ſhall make ſome allowance for the improved culture of this country, which is, that of ſowing wheat on clover lays inſtead of a dunged fallow. This will enable him to ſell at a lower price, as I ſhall

endeavour to explain by the following calculation, ſuppoſing his courſe to be turnips, barley, clover, wheat.

This is indeed a very profitable courſe, and indicates good land; but it would be endleſs to take all the courſes that would ſuit different ſoils; nor will it be difficult to form a general opinion from the following calculation.

I. Turnips.

	l.	*s.*	*d.*
Average Rent - -	0	12	6
Plowing 4 times -	1	0	0
Harrowing - -	0	4	6
Seed - - -	0	1	0
Hoeing - -	0	7	6
Tythe - -	0	3	0
Rates - - -	0	1	6
Dung - -	4	0	0
Fences - -	0	1	0
Wear and tear -	0	1	0
Extraordinary expences on the farm	0	1	0
Water-furrowing -	0	1	0
Expences	6	14	0
Product	2	5	0

The product's being valued at 45 *s.* may be deemed too high, becauſe the beſt turnips are often ſold in diſtant countries at 30 *s.* but it

muſt be obſerved, that is when there is great plenty, and in diſtricts where plowing and labour is much cheaper than the average I have ſtated it at; likewiſe it muſt be conſidered that 2 *l.* 5 *s.* is far ſhort of the profit that is made by feeding them off with their own ſtock; and within 10 or 15 miles from London they are often ſold at 3 *l.* to feed off on the land, and 6 *l.* or 7 *l.* per acre to draw: under all theſe circumſtances I cannot think I have over-rated them.

II. Barley.

	l.	*s.*	*d.*
Rent - -	0	12	6
Three plowings -	0	15	0
Harrowing -	0	3	0
Seed, average 3 buſh.	0	9	0
Striking furrows -	0	0	6
Water-furrowing -	0	1	0
Mowing - -	0	1	6
Carting and ſtacking	0	4	6
Tythe - -	0	3	0
Rates - -	0	1	6
Threſhing, 4 quarters	0	6	0
Fences - -	0	1	0
Wear and tear -	0	1	0
Extraordinary expences	0	1	0
Carting to market -	0	5	0
	3	5	6

				l.	s.	d.
Product, 4 quarters,						
at 24s.	4	16	0			
Straw	0	15	0			
Sheep feed	0	2	6	5	13	6

III. Clover.

	l.	s.	d.
Average rent - -	0	12	6
Seed - -	0	6	0
Mowing and raking twice, carrying and ſtacking	0	14	0
Tythe - -	0	3	0
Rates - -	0	1	6
Extraordinary expences, Wear and tear	0	3	0
Cutting, binding & carting	0	15	0
	2	15	0
Product, 2 ½ loads, at 40s.	5	0	0

Or,

	l.	s.	d.
Rent - -	0	12	6
Seed - -	0	6	0
Tythe, rates, &c.	0	7	6
	1	6	0
Product when fed	2	0	0

Expences.	*l.*	*s.*	*d.*		*Product.*	*l.*	*s.*	*d.*
When mowed	2	15	0			5	0	0
When fed	1	6	0	—		2	0	0
Average	4	1	0			7	0	0
Average	2	0	6			3	10	0

IV. Wheat.

	l.	*s.*	*d.*
Rent - - -	0	12	6
One plowing -	0	5	0
Harrowing and ſowing	0	2	0
Seed 2 ½ buſhels -	0	15	0
Striking furrows -	0	0	6
Water-furrowing -	0	1	0
Weeding -	0	2	6
Reaping - -	0	6	0
Harveſting - -	0	4	6
Tythe rate -	0	4	6
Threſhing - -	0	9	0
Wear and tear, &c.	0	3	0
Carting to market -	0	5	0
Expences	3	10	6
Product.			
3 Quarters at 46*s.* 8*d.*	7	0	0
Straw - - -	1	0	0
	8	0	0

		Total Expences.			Total Product.		
		l.	*s.*	*d.*	*l.*	*s.*	*d.*
1ſt Year,	Turnips	6	14	0	2	5	0
2d Do.	Barley	3	5	6	5	13	6
3d Do.	Average clover	2	0	6	5	10	3
4th Do.	Wheat	3	10	6	8.	0	0
		15	10	6	19	8	6
					15	10	6
	Profit	—		—	3	18	0

By the foregoing eſtimate, which is indeed on an excellent courſe of huſbandry upon land that is proper for it, it appears that the farmer may, by great care and with good luck, obtain about 25 *per cent. per ann.* but to do this he muſt ſell his wheat at 46 *s.* 8 *d.* and his barley at 24 *s.* It muſt likewiſe be obſerved, that it is not every ſoil that will admit of a courſe attended with ſo much profit. However, the concluſion to be drawn from the above ſeems to be this, viz. that to obtain this profit, the produce of an acre of wheat ſhould ſell for 7 *l.* His expences will always be nearly the ſame, but his crop may vary, therefore his wheat ſhould ſell in proportion to his crop; for example;

When

				s.	
When he has	5 Qrs.	he can ſell at		28	—7 *l.*
	4½		about	31	
	4	—	—	35	
	3½	—	—	40	
	3	—	—	46	8 *d.*
	2½	—	—	56	
	2	—	—	70	

Here it is worthy of obſervation, that by the above table it appears that when the farmer has three quarters he can afford to ſell at 46 *s.* 8 *d.* and as the average of the various opinions of the produce of an acre is between 3 Q. and 2½ Q. which would require a price of about 51 *s.* it ſeems to account for the bounty having been extended to 48 *s.* as ſuppoſing that a price the farmer could not afford to ſell at; for tho' at that price there appears now to be a very handſome profit, it muſt be remembered, that agriculture was in thoſe days in a very unimproved ſtate, and attended with much greater expence, which muſt have rendered a much leſs profit; however, it is evident that the fixing the bounty at 48 *s.* was the work of upright and intelligent men, but proves that in the preſent improved ſtate of agriculture, the farmer can afford to ſell much cheaper, and that indeed no bounty is requiſite; but if any, that it ſhould not exceed

exceed 40 *s.* It likewiſe proves, in my opinion, that we need not dread the effects of importation from America; for though land there is cheap, labour is dear, and therefore there is little cauſe to believe that they can underſell us in Europe: nor is it reaſonable to believe that agriculture is there ſo good; and though that climate may be, and is fine, it is not to be expected that they ſhould always have plentiful harveſts when we have ſcanty ones, without which they would be but on a par with us; for ſuppoſing the advantage of climate and cheapneſs of land to be in their favour, the expence of freight, &c. will always make an addition of at leaſt 14 *s.* per quarter. But there is yet another reaſon, which is, that if corn ſhould be very dear here, we may reſt aſſured they would have a profit in ſome proportion to ſuch dearneſs. The truth of this is pretty evident from the preſent price of wheat in America, it being now 5 *s.* 6 *d.* ſterling the buſhel there, and cannot be imported here at our preſent high price: but were it otherwiſe; ſuppoſe the farmer ſhould be curtailed in his profit for one year, it would not be his ruin. As to any quantity that may come from other parts of the world, I am confident they cannot prejudice the Engliſh farmer: it is true that

Holland

Holland has formerly imported great quantities of wheat from Poland, and rye from Ruſſia: but when we conſider the preſent diviſion of Poland, and that Dantzig, thro' which it muſt paſs, is in the hands of Pruſſia, there is greater reaſon to believe that the Dutch will come to us for their ſupply, than that we need fear an influx from Poland.

SECTION IV.

On Markets.

WHEN I appear ſo ſtrong an advocate for free import and export, it will be conceived that I am not leſs ſtrenuous for a perfect freedom in markets: every reſtraint in the ſale of a commodity, is a check on the trade, and muſt neceſſarily enhance the price of the commodity.

The abſurd law of obliging farmers to bring their corn to market, and not ſell by ſample, can anſwer no good purpoſe: as often as it has been attempted to be enforced, it has done miſchief; it has prevented the farmer from expoſing his corn to ſale: for can it be imagined that the grower will ſubmit to be the dupe to the crafty purchaſer, or is it reaſonable that he ſhould?

Real

Real plenty, or real ſcarcity, will fix the ſtandard price, and as he muſt ſubmit to the one, it is as reaſonable that he ſhould reap the benefit of the other: but ſuppoſing it could be enforced, the line of the law can admit of deviation in the defaulter; thus, ſuppoſe a farmer and a miller to be next-door neighbours, with a market at ten miles diſtance; is it agreeable to common ſenſe, that the farmer ſhould employ a team of horſes which may be wanted in the plough, to carry to market that corn which he or the miller muſt bring back again? muſt it not naturally inhance the price? and muſt not that fall upon the Poor, for whoſe ſake the law was ſuppoſed to be made?

To enumerate the many inconveniencies that attend reſtrictions in the corn-trade, would be endleſs. Turn but your eyes to France, and view the inconveniencies they laboured under for ſo many years, by adopting that barbarous feudal ſyſtem in their corn laws! Happily for that country, a ſet of worthy virtuous men, who are as able politicians as they are truly patriots, have, by their publications, opened the eyes of their Government, who are now making great ſtrides in revoking thoſe reſtrictive laws, equally abſurd and injurious to the nation and the individual. Our laws indeed have

have not been ſo rigid; but ſuch as they are, I hope the legiſlature will totally aboliſh them. Let this be their firſt ſtep; it may be done without danger of leſſening our corn-trade, and is one of the neceſſary preludes to the great work of making free ports, which neither can or ought to be done till corn is plentiful, and at nearly an equal price all over Europe.

A ſhort Account of the CORN TRADE *of* AMSTERDAM.

OF all the arguments that can be urged in ſupport of a free corn trade, none will carry with it that conviction which is to be obtained by a candid inquiry into the ſtate of that of Amſterdam. It is indeed my knowledge of ſome circumſtances, relative to that branch of commerce, which makes me ſo ſtrong an advocate for the freedom I recommend. I ſhall therefore, in ſupport of my opinion, give an account of the nature of the trade of that city, and the circumſtances that attend it in conſequence of its ſituation.

I ſhall begin by informing my Reader, that the moſt conſiderable merchants, and moſt opulent people of Amſterdam, are engaged in this trade: it is not indeed well poſſible to aſcertain the fund employed in it, as that muſt vary with the annual growth of the countries from whence it was ſupplied, which was chiefly Poland, by the way of Dantzig, with ſome ſmall quantities from Riga; though this laſt indeed has conſiſted moſtly in rye. Since the diſturbances in Poland, Amſterdam has re-

ceived large quantities of wheat from Archangel, Peterſburgh, and ſeveral other ports in the gulf of Finland; but they have not been ſufficient to preſerve the uſual plenty, and evidently account for the ſcarcity that city experienced theſe two laſt years.

So thoroughly are the Dutch convinced of the national advantage which attends the freedom of their corn trade, that though there was at one period ſo great an appearance of ſcarcity that they would not permit the exportation of potatoes, roots, or any other kind of proviſion, yet they would not ſuffer the freedom of their corn trade to be infringed. Exportation continued as free as their importation, though wheat was then 240 gold guilders *per* laſt, or 168 current guilders *per* half laſt, equal to about 16 *l.* ſterling *per* load. It is true indeed that there are ſome ſmall duties and port charges, ſuch as 6 guilders *per* laſt, which is about 13 *d. per* quarter for import, and about one half of that for export, to which is to be added one half *per cent.* admiralty duty, or what we ſhould call port charge. I have indeed recommended the aboliſhing every charge, and am confident it is neceſſary ſo to do in this country, where it cannot be denied but that the delays and difficulties to which our traders

are ſubject from the behaviour of cuſtom-houſe officers, are ſuch ſevere checks on trade, as ought to be aboliſhed, eſpecially in a trade which conſiſts ſo much in coaſting voyages. However, if the aboliſhing them cannot be complied with, let us at leaſt adopt the ſenſible mode of the Dutch, who have fixed their duties at one regular ſtandard; well knowing that if it was left dependant on the market price, the trade would even be ſubject to frauds, which can ſo eaſily be practiſed by a few men, who always have it in their power to make whatever artificial price may ſuit them.

As a yet ſtronger proof of the advantage of a free corn trade, I can inform the reader, that the wiſdom of the corn laws of the Dutch, which were founded on ſound policy, has been confirmed to them by experience: for, ſome years ago, when they were under great apprehenſion of ſcarcity, they laid an embargo on corn, but after three months trial were obliged to open their ports; nor have the States ſuffered it to be attempted ſince, not even laſt year, when the univerſal appearance of a dearth in Germany might ſeem to require it, if any thing could: the experience which they had acquired by the former attempt, convinced them of the folly of ſuch a ſtep;

for in conſequence of the embargo here alluded to, they ſoon diſcovered they were in danger of being deprived of that ſupply which enabled them to be the warehouſe keepers and carriers of all Europe. By this wiſe regulation they have had the ſupplying of France, Spain, Portugal, and Italy, nay even Germany, by the way of the Rhine: but what is very remarkable, and the ſtrongeſt proof of the advantage of free trade, is, that Amſterdam, from a long habit of carrying it on, enjoys it to its full extent, notwithſtanding every natural diſadvantage that can poſſibly attend a country. In proof of what I now advance, I can inform the reader of two remarkable inſtances; the one is, that corn was ſhipped at Amſterdam for France, but from an apprehenſion the ſhip would not get time enough through the Texel, the remainder of the quantity was ſent by inland navigation at a conſiderable expence to Rotterdam, to be ſhipped off there; and the fact is, that the laſt ſhip was returned again from the coaſt of France, before the Amſterdam ſhip got out of the Texel. The other inſtance, not leſs ſtriking, and more pertinent to my preſent ſubject, is, that the ſame houſe ſhipped a cargo from Amſterdam and London at the ſame time, both bound to Leghorn; the Engliſh ſhip returned into the river, and the remittances

tances were made, before the Dutchman got out of the Texel.

The two abovementioned examples are, I hope, ſufficient to prove the natural advantages we have in point of ſituation; nor can I think that people will be ſo blind as not to ſee the great national advantage that would attend ſuch an export of the natural growth of our country. It is true, indeed, that according to the information given by the ingenious author of the Corn Tracts, the greateſt quantity ever exported here is too trifling to be thought an object: but let it be remembered, that all I mean to prove is, that this is entirely owing to our trade's not being open, and that we might naturally command the whole of it; eſpecially ſince the diviſion of Poland, the growth of which muſt now come through Dantzick, which at preſent belongs to the King of Pruſſia.

Here I muſt inform thoſe who do not think the corn trade can ever be a great object to England, that the capital which is engaged in it at Amſterdam is far beyond belief. Let them judge of it when I tell them, that, on an average, there are ſeldom leſs than 20,000 laſts, which make above 200,000 quarters, lying in their magazines. The value of this quantity cannot be much leſs than

400,000 £. ſterling. So conſiderable a ſum as this lying always locked up in an artificial trade, proves the advantage of it, and demonſtrates that we need only create the trade, to have the traders. I have before obſerved, that the trade which is really beneficial to a country muſt conſiſt in the exportation of ſuch articles as are the produce of that country: but, in contradiction to this idea, it appears that a ſenſible policy has rendered the moſt unnatural branch of trade highly beneficial to Holland; for, without a blade of corn growing in their own country, excepting a very ſmall quantity in Zealand and Eaſt-Frieſland, the magazines of Amſterdam have always a ſupply for every port in Europe, brought in and carried out through the moſt tedious and dangerous paſſage into the German Ocean, or the Channel.

The neceſſary reſult of what I have been ſaying is, that if we, who are ſo well ſituated to ſupply thoſe markets, were to adopt the policy of the Dutch, we ſhould enjoy their profits in a much higher degree than they can with their bad navigation, and this in addition to the great advantage of a natural trade, which is that of exporting the produce of our own country. Can there poſſibly be a clearer demonſtration of the encourage-

couragement it would give to agriculture, or do we want a ſtronger proof that we ſhould always have plenty at home for our own conſumption, when the people at Amſterdam, who are obliged to purchaſe it, have their magazines always full, notwithſtanding that the port is never ſhut?

As what I have advanced on this head may perhaps not be credited, but deemed the phantom of a wild brain, let me intreat the legiſlature to conſult that able and upright miniſter at the Hague, Sir Joſeph Yorke. He can give indiſputable information on this ſubject, information which may be depended on; and upon his opinion I will reſt mine.

APPENDIX.

AFTER I had finiſhed the foregoing Eſſay, the third edition of the Rev. Doctor Price's *Obſervations on Reverſionary Payments, &c.* was ſent to me from town. His deſervedly reſpectable character made it neceſſary that I ſhould take particular notice of what he ſays on monopolizing farms and its conſequences. I am ſorry to find myſelf under a neceſſity of differing widely with him in my opinion on this ſubject; and cannot help lamenting that a gentleman of ſo much knowledge, and who is ſo clear and demonſtrative in all that he ſays on thoſe matters which come within the ſphere of his real ſtudies, ſhould, ſo inadvertently, enter into a popular error, and join in the cry which has been artfully kept up to irritate and inflame the minds of men.

My expreſſions on this occaſion may ſeem too ſtrong; but ſo ſenſible and candid an antagoniſt requires to be very pointedly refuted. I declare, that I highly revere and eſteem his character, and am perſuaded that

that it was his very love of truth that has led him out of the way: but at the ſame time I hope this inſtance of his having undeſignedly promoted the preſent uneaſineſs of a miſguided people, will be a caution to him, in the future, to keep to ſuch ſubjects as really come within the line of his particular ſtudies; and that he will not ſo readily give credit to reports propagated by deſigning men, the circumſtances of which he is not perfectly acquainted with; for an opinion of ſo much weight as his, is more dangerous than the declamations of an hundred ſcribblers whom I have not thought worthy of notice. This, I hope, will be an apology for my pointing out to him the true ſtate of the facts concerning which he has been miſinformed.

As to the authority of Mr. *Muret*, and his reaſoning on the ſubject of great farms, (quoted by Dr. Price, p. 373.) it has very little weight with me: not that I mean to doubt his veracity, for I believe he relates and argues as he thinks; but ſpeculative productions ſeldom carry conviction. If the village that was converted into a demeſne, was made a park or pleaſure ground, I can ſuppoſe the fact; or if it was a neſt of houſes thrown down and converted into corn-fields, I will allow that it could not

lodge

lodge ſo many inhabitants; or if it was a number of ſmall farms taken up by ſome rich man, who, though merely a ſpeculator, thought himſelf a farmer, I will believe the produce to have been leſs; but if it was put into the hands of an intelligent huſbandman, I think I have ſhewn in the foregoing pages, that the produce could not but be greater. Our country abounds with facts of this kind, and I hope their number will increaſe.

When it is done by landlords, to reduce the repairs of cottages, I abhor the idea, and have accordingly exploded it: but the ſpeculations which the great farmer is able to make, put it in his power to draw more riches from the bowels of the earth, and thereby he becomes a more uſeful member of this great and powerful nation. Perhaps Mr. Muret would have rejoiced to have ſeen an inſtance of induſtry which I met with in Flanders, a dozen men mattocking up a field of ſtubble to put in wheat: but the man who knew the uſe and benefit of the plough, lamented the loſt labour of eleven of thoſe poor wretches, who might have been employed more beneficially for their country in manufactures, whilſt one might cultivate with a plough as much land as would ſupport the reſt. This would be a

public

public benefit, and not a calamity:—nor is it a conſequence that there muſt be depopulation, becauſe men are not ſeen waſting their labour in the open field.

In regard to the many calculations which have appeared, and by which the depopulation of this country has been attempted to be proved, I can ſay little; nor would it become me to enter the liſts with the many ingenious men who have made that a part of their ſtudies; but I ſhall not ſcruple to ſay, that the *data* on which theſe calculations are made are, in my opinion, too ſlight to eſtabliſh certain conſequences. For example, the reſidence in London of thoſe who are deemed its inhabitants is by no means regular, and the number who come from different parts to London and its environs within the bills of mortality, for advice in their laſt ſtage, muſt ſwell the liſt of deaths. On the other hand, as the liſt of births is only taken from the chriſtenings, the number of born muſt be much greater, as neither the Diſſenters nor the Quakers are chriſtened in our churches: thus the whole is erroneous. Again, when we conſider the number of great manufacturing towns which have ariſen within this century, and ſee every where not only an increaſe of culture, but alſo that it is carried

carried on in a much more ſpirited manner than formerly, (circumſtances which muſt neceſſarily employ a greater number of hands) I cannot ſee on what foundation we can determine the number of the inhabitants to be leſs. As to forming the calculation from the number of houſes, ſo far as my obſervation has extended, that cannot be done: but if any medium is to be taken, I ſhould rather fix it at ſix perſons in a houſe, which would make our whole number amount to about ſix millions. But when we conſider the numbers of poor that inhabit one houſe in manufacturing towns and great cities, nay even in country villages, there can be no doubt but that ſix millions is far under the mark. However, neither of theſe doctrines can have any relation to the ſcarcity of corn, which, in reality, is ſcarce or not ſcarce in proportion to the conſumption of it. If there are more mouths, there will be more corn, becauſe there will be more hands to till the earth; and if there is more corn, there will be more mouths, becauſe plenty will bring people; and thus, by this happy connection and dependance one on the other, I am pleaſed to think the world will go on as it has hitherto continued to do. If any of the ingenious literary world agree with me in opinion, I hope to ſee

ſome

ſome of their productions calculated to eaſe the minds of men, by convincing them that induſtry and chearful ſobriety are the only requiſites to acquire that happineſs, which deſpondency, with a diſpoſition of exclaiming againſt the times, precludes them from.

Dr. Price's diſtinctions (p. 379, 380) between the wild and the civilized ſtate are well drawn, and his obſervations on them are very juſt: but when he knows that the natural progreſſion from an infant colony to a powerful and free nation is always attended with a proportionate degree of luxury, why does he lament in print what the art and power of man cannot prevent? It is a theſis for a ſchool, but ſhould not have flowed from the Doctor's pen.

I perfectly agree with Dr. Price (p. 381) in his opinion of the fatal conſequences that have attended the accumulation of property in this kingdom, and moſt ſincerely regret the loſs of that ſet of men who were called yeomen: but let not the accumulation of property be blended with the renting of large farms; its tendency is juſt the reverſe.

By the quotation (p. 381) from Suſmilch, one would imagine it was propoſed to adopt the law of Licinius and Romulus. That po-

licy

licy of the then Romans was wiſe; it was when they were a ſmall ſtate, and confined by their enemies to a ſmall extent of country: it was then neceſſary that the little quantity of land on which they were to depend for ſubſiſtance ſhould be portioned out in ſmall parcels, in order that each family might have ſufficient to maintain itſelf; for then it was not a diſgrace to handle the plough or the ſpade, though the very men who did it were to be called out to command their armies. In a nation like the Romans, not depending on its manufactures and commerce, and whoſe only care is to provide corn for itſelf, perhaps Mr. Muret's obſervations, and Licinius's law, may be the beſt inſtitution. Upon this principle too it was that the Spartans did not aim at raiſing more corn, though by the hands of their ſlaves, than was neceſſary to maintain a warlike people. But to adopt ſuch a ſyſtem in a commercial nation, whoſe very commerce depends upon agriculture, is by no means of a piece with the Doctor's ſentiments on other ſubjects; for ſuppoſing the farmers reſtricted to ſeven *jugera*, or five acres, what could be the produce? The land would be too little for a plough, and too much for the ſpade, as hath been ſhewn in p. 3 to 14 of the foregoing ſheets, where the beneficial ſize of a farm is explained; and in p. 83, the Doctor will be pleaſed to obſerve, that

that equal care was taken to provide the ſeven and the two *jugera* for the cottagers, who, though not farmers, are, when diſpoſed of in their proper ſphere, equally neceſſary and beneficial to a ſtate, as there will be a greater increaſe of produce by their joint labours in one farm, than when each is to toil for himſelf on a little ſpot better calculated for the labour of his wife and children. The certain weekly income of the huſband's labour, not attended with the anxiety of the little farmer, will procure more real comfort in his little cottage, and therefore will be more likely to promote population. As to the ſuppoſed advantages of the commons, and the means of the cottager's procuring ſubſiſtence from them, that matter is fully explained in p. 83 and 84; and if by converting the little farmers into a body of men who muſt work for others more labour is produced, it is an advantage which the nation ſhould wiſh for: the compulſion will be that of honeſt induſtry to provide for a family, which by that means is leſs liable to become a burden to the pariſh, than that of the little farmer, whoſe labours, being attended with conſtant anxiety and diſtreſs, ſeldom proſper.

I agree with Dr. Price that more bread will be conſumed, and therefore that more corn

corn will be grown: but that will be likewiſe a benefit to the nation; for it will be by the aſſiſtance of the cottager and his family who are employed in the culture of the land, inſtead of loitering away their time in tending a few ſtarved ſheep on the commons, and cutting furzes. It will enable him to go to market to purchaſe what food he pleaſes, and by the produce being greater when their joint labours are employed on one farm, there will be a ſurplus for manufacturers, and by this means manufactures, one of the mines of this nation, will increaſe, in proportion to the quantity of corn produced; but wherever numbers of men are employed, there will be among them idle and debauched, who, thanks to the poors' laws as they now ſtand, will load the pariſh, though not real objects of charity.

This is the way in which the renting of large and moderate-ſized tracts operates, (ſee p. 3 to 14), and this is the way by which this country has for many years paſt been becoming the moſt powerful in Europe.

I ſhall grant with Dr. Price, (p. 383) that what has been ſuggeſted will promote tillage; but how it is to account for the fact which he immediately alludes to in 1697,

namely, that when wheat was at 3*l.* and exportation went on, and yet that there was no clamour, I know not; unleſs it proves that the exportation of corn, which then firſt took place in conſequence of the wiſe law that was paſſed in 1689 for granting a bounty, inſpired the Poor with induſtry, which kept their minds peaceable and ſober; whereas there now prevails among the lower claſs of people a licentiouſneſs which has been, in a great meaſure, occaſioned by the numberleſs publications on the cauſes of ſcarcity, too evidently calculated to inflame their minds.

Dr. Price attributes the abovementioned patience in the Poor to the then cheapneſs of other food. I allow that this might naturally enough have been the conſequence, had the fact been ſo: but, from the beſt authority I can procure, which is the account of the prices of beef as contracted for from time to time by the Victualling-Office, it appears, that in 1697, the time alluded to, the commiſſioners of that office contracted at 25*s. per C. wt.* which is nearly the ſame they do now; but what is more remarkable, is, that the average of the five preceding and five following years was only 23*s.* 1*d. per C. wt.* and in 1697, Pork was at 31*s. per C. wt.* However, this was undoubtedly cheaper

cheaper in proportion than bread: but it was a natural conſequence, for agriculture at that time, I mean the plough, was but in its infancy; herds and paſture ſtill prevailed; and from the uncertainty which the people had been accuſtomed to in the great variation of the price of corn, it is no wonder they were in the habit of living more on meat, which had ever been plentiful, as herds and flocks had been their riches; and as little ſurprizing is it that they, in 1697, ſtill continued in the uſe of meat for their chief ſupport. The very ſame cuſtom ſtill prevails in the iſlands and all along the North-Weſt coaſt of Scotland.

In regard to the Doctor's obſervation on the great difference there was in the price of meat and corn during the laſt century, when he acknowledges that corn was dearer than it has been at an average for theſe laſt 40 years, but that meat was about half its preſent price; it only proves, that his argument can have no reference to the preſent times, and that that great difference in the price of meat and corn was occaſioned by this country's having been, during almoſt the whole century, diſtracted by civil wars, which muſt be a check to the plough, and encourage herds and flocks, the only moveable riches of the people.

The Doctor ſays, that beef and pork were ſold at 2 ½ and three pounds for a penny at the ſame time that wheat was ſold at 7*s.* and 8 *s.* per quarter, and that bore the ſame proportion to the price of corn as it would bear now were this at about 4*l.* per quarter. This aſſertion muſt certainly be intended to prove, that either corn is too cheap, or meat too dear; but, in my opinion, it proves neither; for every commodity will bear a value in proportion to its plenty and the demand for it. It is inconteſtably proved in hiſtory, that the plenty of meat was in proportion to the ſcarcity of corn; conſequently the price muſt vary in the ſame proportion; but when a demand for each is equal, and the plenty of each is the ſame, the value of the one muſt fall, or that of the other riſe, till they come on a par, and that value will always be according to the value of money: if therefore the price of corn is nearly what it ought to be, which can only be determined by the proportion that the value of land bears to the value of money, it is as evident, that meat ought to riſe in the ſame proportion: but the only method of aſcertaining what ſhould be the price of the one for it to be in proportion to that of the other, is to allot a certain ſum of money to the raiſing of corn, and an equal ſum to the rearing and fattening of cattle; an equal

profit

profit will determine the real value of each. If this was done, I am pretty certain it would appear that the preſent prices are nearly equal, and that meat has not riſen in too great proportion; nor will it be found, if we conſider the value of money and of land, that proviſions are greatly above what they ought to be. Indeed this is pretty clearly demonſtrated by the Doctor's own tables: I call them his, becauſe I cannot find the corn-tables carried down lower than 1766 on any other authority than his: he extends them to 1772, and makes the average from 1766 to 1772, 2*l.* 6*s.* 6*d.* This is evidently higher than the preceding average; though not ſo much as I ſhould have expected. However, this difference is clearly accounted for by a very remarkable circumſtance, which is, that it is the exact period during which this country has had ſucceſſive bad crops. It likewiſe ſhews, that ſcarcity is the real, as it is the natural cauſe of the preſent high prices, and that theſe are therefore not to be attributed to the various cauſes which ſome have as wickedly, as others have ignorantly, pretended to point out. Whichever of theſe may have been the motive, both of them are fraught with the ſame evil tendency of ſtirring up riot and confuſion. That the prices are too high for the Poor at this moment, I confeſs;

and the cauſe of their being ſo is evident: it proceeds from the general calamity that has attended trade during this laſt year; a calamity which has occaſioned a general conſternation among all ranks of people. The general diffidence that now prevails, and the doubt which the merchant has of not receiving his remittances, makes him cautious in giving freſh orders, and tardy in his payments to the manufacturer: the manufacturer muſt, in conſequence of this, in the ſame manner treat thoſe from whom he purchaſes his materials, and ceaſe to employ ſo many hands as before. By this chain of circumſtances, the hardſhip muſt ultimately fall upon the labourer dependant on ſuch manufactures, who, though he could afford to maintain himſelf and family well at the wages he now earns, if he was in conſtant employ, muſt certainly feel the weight of the preſent prices of neceſſaries, which are on this account, and on this only, too high. What I have ſaid of the manufacturer, may equally hold good with regard to the common labourer; for undoubtedly the late ſcanty harveſt has deprived many threſhers of their winter's work, and I can believe that many hands which before found employment in ſupplying the luxuries and pleaſures of life, both in town and country, may, in conſequence of the appre-

prehenſion that has ſeized every one, now want work: but this is a momentary evil.

I cannot quit this ſubject without pointing out one glaring fault: it is, that the average which has occaſioned this clamour does not arrive at the price when exportation is allowed with bounty; and it muſt be ſuppoſed that the bounty's being fixed at any price, muſt imply that ſuch price ſhould be under the general average of the whole country; whereas Dr. Price's elucidation of this matter clearly demonſtrates, that the opening or ſhutting of the port, and the giving or taking off the bounty, depend ſolely on the artificial price of Bear-key. There cannot be a clearer proof than this, that reſtrictions in any trade muſt ever ſubject the Legiſlature to be miſled by intereſted deſigning men: it likewiſe proves, that reſtrictions naturally create the very monopoly which they are meant to guard againſt; and thus ſhews the abſolute neceſſity of a perfect freedom in trade in general, but moſt eſpecially in that of corn.

In regard to what the Doctor ſays (page 388) on the incloſures of the common-fields in Leiceſterſhire, from whence he concludes that the increaſe of tillage there is

at an end, I ſhall briefly obſerve, that it greatly ſurprized me, as being diametrically contrary to every day's experience. I make no doubt but that the Doctor had that information; but I would adviſe a cautious inquiry into the validity of the authority, before he, whoſe character as an author is in ſuch high repute, ventures to aſſert ſo palpable an abſurdity: but granting the fact, the only obſervation I can make upon it is, that the land is in very unſkilful hands. In regard to Northamptonſhire incloſure, I can ſpeak with ſome degree of knowledge, and notwithſtanding the remarks of the ſenſible author alluded to, I know farmers who have chearfully ſubmitted to have their rents doubled on the incloſure of the common-field land, though intended to be kept under the plough, ſaying, that they muſt now become better farmers, and not continue ſuch ſlovens. That laying down many of theſe incloſures to graſs has prevailed, I ſhall not diſallow, and ſuch tracts muſt conſequently bear the face of depopulation: however, the men are not loſt, but perhaps, with the ground, better employed; not but that, as an individual, I ſhould, upon my own eſtate, lay a certain reſtriction in the allotment of paſture and arable; but how far commiſſioners ought to be intruſted with ſuch a charge, I ſhall not preſume to ſay.

With

With regard to the quotation from Lord Bacon, it is not applicable to the preſent times, and I think I have ſufficiently expoſed, in the foregoing ſheets, the abſurdity of owners holding the plough themſelves, at a time when corn is, or ought to be, eſteemed part of the trade and wealth of this great nation. Dr. Price's farther quotations (page 391 and 392 of this work) are fully anſwered by the hiſtory of the times. Herds and cattle were formerly the only riches, and the free exportation of wool occaſioned thoſe monopolies of land and ſheep which were found to be of evil tendency: a few men could tend great numbers, and the reſt of the ruſtic tribe were unemployed; for, by the exportation of the raw wool, there could be no woollen manufactories. On this account it was, that in 1537, flocks were ſtinted to 2000, and tenements were to be erected on a given number of acres: but yet were people ſo averſe to agriculture, that it was neceſſary to ſet a fine on laying down arable ground to paſture. In thoſe days agriculture, I mean the plough, was eſteemed of ſuch conſequence to the nation, that it had not only every encouragement, but was even inforced; whereas now that it has arrived to a degree of perfection, it is the faſhion of the times to be jealous of its

proſperity,

proſperity, and to load it with every incumbrance; in ſhort, all the acts which paſſed, and are here alluded to, were intended only to people a country laid waſte and depopulated by civil wars: but ſuch reſtrictions now would be altogether abſurd. In regard to the Doctor's obſervations in page 393, I ſhall ſay, that every one was cultivating for his own wants, as our author juſtly obſerves is now the caſe in the interior parts of America: but I am happy to think that in theſe days this nation will vye with Holland to ſupply all Europe with corn, either directly, or through the bowels of our manufacturers. As to the proportion of the price of labour, it can bear no compariſon; for if no labour was wanted, there could be no price; nor is a compariſon to be drawn with the preſent time, when, owing to ſucceſſive bad crops, corn has riſen a little. But it may not be unworthy of notice, that in the circumſtance of the price of labour's not being increaſed in the proportion of the price of proviſions, the Doctor's aſſertion corroborates what is ſaid in the valuable works of Mr. Arthur Young, and will, I hope, pacify the minds of thoſe who imagine that the dearneſs of proviſions muſt ruin our manufactures.

As

As to the circumſtance (page 394 of Dr. Price) of the ranks of men being altered, I agree and lament the fact with the Doctor: but perhaps we do not mean the ſame claſs of men. I moſt truly lament the loſs of our yeomenry, that ſet of men who really kept up the independance of this nation; and ſorry I am to ſee their lands now in the hands of monopolizing Lords, tenanted out to ſmall farmers, who hold their leaſes on ſuch conditions as to be little better than vaſſals ready to attend a ſummons on every miſchievous occaſion.

With regard to the claſs called Hirelings, I believe they are moſtly in the ſame ſtate as they were, with the benefit of work at preſent, inſtead of being prowling about commons and waſtes; and as to the luxury which the Doctor talks of, it has been and ever will be an attendant on a wealthy free people, and, with the riches, diffuſes itſelf through all ranks of people; it is one of thoſe evils which cannot be avoided, and therefore is needleſs to lament.

It is true that the lower people pay their proportion of the taxes, that is to ſay, of thoſe taxes which are levied by aſſize, for then they fall always on the conſumer:

for example, the currier who pays the tax, charges it to the ſhoemaker, and the ſhoemaker lays it on the labourer, who, dealing in an article that is not aſſizeable (his labour) cannot raiſe the price of it to the farmer; therefore the tax falls on him: but though it may not appear viſible to every eye, I will maintain, that an equal proportion of it falls on the wealthy; for the rich man, who ſpends the whole of his income, by conſuming a greater quantity of aſſizeable commodities, pays his juſt proportion of the tax.

It is likewiſe true, that the lower people fight the battles of a nation: but, as Sir James Stewart rightly ſays, it is from the free hands, the manufacturers and artificers, that our armies are recruited, and not from the cottager and ſmall farmer that ſuch drafts are, or ought to be made.

The reaſoning of the author of *The Enquiry* concerning the compariſon which ought to be made between the prices of corn ſince the bounty, and during the reign of James I. cannot be juſt, becauſe they are founded either on falſe or imperfect facts: he thinks the latter period ſhould be taken, becauſe it was peaceable, commerce increaſed, and all the influence which the

riches

riches of America could produce on the prices of corn and proviſions had taken place: but the reign of Charles I. excepting the years 1642, 3, 4, and 5, (the prices of which do not come into his account) ought for the ſame reaſons to be taken: they alſo were peaceable, and commerce had increaſed. The average of theſe two periods ſhould therefore be taken, and in that caſe the foundation of our author's reaſoning falls to the ground. But in the conduct of it he contradicts himſelf: under the reign of James I. he ſays, *the influence of American money had taken full effect*; under that of Charles I. *that the great plenty of money had riſen the price of ſuperior proviſions*; conſequently the increaſe of money had *not* taken its full effect. But whether the reign of Charles or James ſhould be taken is not eſſential, ſince, in juſt reaſoning, we ſhould take neither; for no compariſon can be made between periods in which the *intereſt* and conſequently the *quantity* of money is ſo extremely different, being more than 50 *per cent.*

The Author of the *Enquiry* (p. 93) ſpeaking of the bounty, ſays, employing ſo large a proportion of our cultivated lands muſt ſtraiten the means of raiſing every other

kind of proviſion to ſuch a degree that the utmoſt exertion of the Poor cannot reach them, and the people muſt be obliged either to deſert the country, or enhance the price of labour.

Upon this I ſhall obſerve, that the moſt material fact in the whole Enquiry is againſt him; I mean, the fall in the price of corn ſince the bounty was given, a fall which every one of his tables ſufficiently proves, and of which we ſee the conſequence in the people's not having deſerted their country: on the contrary, we have received great acceſſions from every quarter of the globe; and as to the riſe in the price of labour, it has riſen all over Europe, as well as in England, and ought to riſe, as well as all commodities, with the increaſe of money.

But as our author attempts to enforce the reſult of his tables by an eſtimate drawn up of the farmer's expences, produce, and profit on 10 acres, which he would prove to amount to 68 *per cent. per ann.* for four ſucceſſive years; he will permit me to ſet him right, in ſome eſſential points, which can only be done by ſtating a true account of the expences and product of ſuch a courſe as he lays down.

Rent

	l.	s.	d.
Rent on one acre fallow	0	12	6
Ditto, ſecond year,	0	12	6
Plowing 6 times, at leaſt 5 s. each time	1	10	0
Harrowing three times	0	6	0
Dung - - -	4	0	0
Seed, Wheat 2 ½ buſh. at 6 s. and ſowing	0	15	0
Water-furrowing -	0	1	0
Weeding - -	0	2	6
Reaping - - -	0	6	0
Houſing and ſtacking	0	4	6
Tythe, two years	0	6	0
Rates - - - -	0	3	0
Threſhing of 3 ½ Qrs. average	0	10	6
Fencing - -	0	1	0
Wear and tear, and ſundry other unſpecified expences	0	2	0
Carting to market -	0	5	0
Expences	9	17	6

Product.

Mean crop, 3 Qrs. at 46 s. 8 d.	7 l.	0	0
Straw -	1 l.	0	0
	8	0	0
Loſs	1	17	6

As is almoſt ever the caſe with wheat on dung fallow; the profit being on the ſubſequent crops.

3d Year, Barley.

	l.	s.	d.
Rent as before, -	0	12	6
Plowing thrice, at 5s.	0	15	0
Harrowing - -	0	3	0
Seed and ſowing, 3 buſh.	0	9	0
Striking furrows -	0	0	6
Mowing - -	0	1	6
Carting, houſing and ſtacking	0	4	6
Tythe - -	0	3	0
Rates - -	0	1	6
Water-furrowing -	0	1	0
Threſhing, 4 qrs. -	0	6	0
Fencing, wear & tear, &c.	0	3	0
Carting to market -	0	5	0
Expences	3	5	6

Product.

4 Qrs. at 24s.	4l.	16s.	0d.
Straw,	0	15s.	0d.
	5	11	0

4th Year, Oats.

	l.	*s.*	*d.*
Rent - -	0	12	6
Plowing once	0	5	0
Seed, 4 buſh. at 20*s.* per Qr.	0	10	0
Harrowing and water-furrowing, &c.	0	2	6
Mowing - -	0	1	4
Houſing and ſtacking	0	4	6
Tythe and rates -	0	4	6
Threſhing 4 Quarters	0	5	0
Fencing, wear and tear, and carting to market	0	8	0
Expences	2	13	4

Product.

4 Qrs. at 18*s.*	3*l.* 12*s.*		
Straw -	0 14*s.*		
	4	6	0

General Expences.				*General Product.*		
Wheat	9	17	6	8	0	0
Barley	3	5	6	5	11	0
Oats	2	13	4	4	6	0
	15	16	4	17	17	0
				15	16	4
Profit —				2	0	8

By the above eſtimate, which I believe neareſt the truth, it will appear, that the farmer may clear about 12 *per cent. per ann.* in four years: but from this ſhould be deducted the intereſt of his money for the greateſt part of the expences of the wheat crop, which was expended the firſt year; and I will venture to ſay, that with ſuch an execrable courſe of huſbandry, it is full as much as any farmer makes: but this does no more than prove that very little dependance is to be made on ſuch calculations. All that is meant by this refutation, is only to expoſe the fallacy of ſuch calculations, from whence ſuch falſe arguments are deduced. Whether done by deſign, or through ignorance, they have the ſame miſchievous effect of inflaming the minds of men; and as the whole of this author's arguments depends on ſuch falſe principles, I ſhall not think his ſubſequent obſervations worthy my notice, but conclude with a hint to thoſe who are biaſſed by his reaſoning, to enquire carefully into the truth of the facts which ſerve him for the baſis of his arguments.

FINIS.